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CHRISTIANITY

AND

CHILDHOOD;

OR,

THE RELATION OF CHILDREN TO THE CHURCH.

BY

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PREFACE.

THE present work is designed to establish, on Biblical and Historical grounds, the reasons for Child-membership in the Christian Church. Every institution of the Church must have some fundamental reasons for its existence, otherwise it is entitled to oblivion. While the literature on the correlated doctrine is exceeding voluminous, there is no serious attempt, with, perhaps, one or two exceptions, to reduce to a system the various facts which constitute the doctrine underlying the practice of those Churches who include children within their folds. There is, therefore, a real demand for a work of this nature. That this work now presented to the Church will answer the requirement, is not the province of the writer to decide. It has been prompted solely by the desire to advance *within*, the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. That it will be acceptable to all, is not expected. It certainly will not be to those who maintain an unreasonable adherence to the fabricated technicalities of theological terminology, nor to those who antagonize the conservative-progressive method of the best thought of the present.

In my ideal of it, I have but skirted the rim of this great argument, yet no important fact has been

ignored or indifferently treated, while the many divisions have been joined in an articulate, systematic whole. The subject is immense, is of such supreme importance in its results, and so varied in its relations to the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, that it would be a miracle (not to be looked for) if any book producible could satisfy the critical judgment of even all those who may agree on the general principles. I have followed the truths of Scripture and the facts of history; and the critic who imagines I have misinterpreted both, will find it easier to utter his opinion than to furnish the proof.

It will be readily perceived that not all is said that might be said under each theme; and that one or two subjects, important in themselves, have been wholly omitted, such as the "Post-mortem Probation of Children," and the "Origin and Scope of the Catechumenate in the Primitive Church." Should this work receive the approbation of those interested in the position of children in the Christian scheme of redemption, these subjects and others will be added. In the meantime the English reader will find full information concerning catechumens in Bingham's "Antiquities of the Christian Church," Vol. I, and Neander's "History of the Christian Church," translated by Torrey, Vol. I. One thing the author desires to emphasize, and that is, that these pages are not designed to be polemic in character or tone. They were not written in that spirit. It is devoutly

hoped that no written word of mine will ever wound the denominational feeling of any child of God. I have been loyal to the Truth, as prolonged investigation has made it clear. Alas! the history of the Church only too clearly shows that that very loyalty is ofttimes the severest accusation of error. My sole aim has been to set forth, in sun-clear manner, the true grounds for the practice of the Church, and to awaken zeal in the Divinely appointed shepherds for the lambs of the Flock.

Were I certain that no discordant sound would arise from this work, written in behalf of children, I would, as a testimony to much that is contained in these pages, inscribe it to the memory of a bright, sweet boy, who, after five years of blissful life, full of Christian joy, song, and prayer, went out one evening, in the October sunset, while the first pages of this book were being written, to the Church of the first-born, which is without fault before the throne of God.

R. J. C.

August, 1891.

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CHRISTIANITY AND CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER I.

HEATHENISM AND CHILDHOOD.

WHEN the religion of Jesus advanced beyond the walls of Jerusalem, and began its mission to the Gentiles, it came into immediate conflict with world-powers—social, political, and religious—such as mankind had never witnessed before, and the like of which will never be seen again.

By the force of her arms, the wisdom of her statesmen, the vigor of her laws, and the majesty of her name, Rome had expanded the limits of her domain till the boundaries of the empire, under Augustus, stretched from the Rhine and the Danube on the north, to the African and Arabian deserts on the south; and from the Atlantic Ocean on the west, to the Euphrates on the east. Within this territory, which embraced those fair countries where civilization, letters, the arts, and the sciences had their birth, and had attained their highest development, all philosophies were taught, all religions tolerated,* and,

* "The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true, by the philosopher as equally false, and by the magistrate as equally useful." (Gibbon, Decline and Fall, chap. ii, where see notes; and also Dean Milman's note to a similar passage in chap. xv, I, where, on the other hand, the intolerant spirit of

through the universal decay of morals, all wickedness was practiced.

Ancient traditions and beliefs had lost their power. The Egyptian still worshiped Isis and Serapis, and the many monster-headed representations of his divinities; the Phœnician and the Chaldean still had recourse to Bel, and indulged in the impure rites of Astarte; the gods of Greece and of Rome were still invoked by the priests, and their temples, often the centers of pollution,* were still thronged by the multitudes; but the old faiths in Providence, in the real existence of the very gods whose altars were fragrant with incense, in the rewards of virtue and the punishment of vice,—these had departed. The Elder Pliny considered it degrading to the idea of a supreme God when men imagined that he could or would take interest in human affairs, and finally concluded, from the practices of men throughout the world, who at all hours and in all places invoked *fortune*, that God was uncertain.†

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paganism is fully set forth.) Nevertheless, it can not be doubted that the policy of Augustus was in favor of universal religious toleration. "Le favori intelligent d'Auguste élève le Panthéon, et invite les dieux de toutes les nations à se réunir pour vivre en paix sous un même toit." (De Broglie, L'Église et L'Empire Romain, Sixième Edition, p. 5.)

* "But if I add what all know and will readily admit to be the fact—that in the temples adulteries are arranged; . . . that often in the houses of the temple-keepers and priests, under the sacrificial fillets, and the sacred hats and the purple robes, amid the fumes of incense, deeds of licentiousness are done." (Tertul., Apology, chap, xv.)

† Nat. Hist., Book II, chap. vii: "Mittendum vero agere curam illud, quidquid est summum."

Seneca* testifies to the general contempt for the gods which had gradually permeated the minds of all, and Juvenal† utters the same complaint when he says that, owing to the corruptions of the time, one may be believed to have perjured himself with impunity at the altars of all the gods that were dear to Rome. Lucian‡ introduces one of the deities, Momus, as saying to Apollo, that since the number of divinities has increased, perjury and sacrilege are so much the more prevalent, while the old gods are being totally despised.

Paradoxical as it may seem to one who has never seriously studied the human heart, with this general skepticism and contempt for the ancient deities, there arose in Rome, which in itself was an epitome of the empire, a passion for foreign superstitions. Tacitus, the historian of that age, narrates the interest of Germanicus in the Egyptian gods; Vespasian consulted the gods of Memphis, and, being desirous of the imperial purple, offered sacrifice to a local deity on Mount Carmel. Nero worshiped the licentious Dea Syra; Marcus Aurelius, Severus, Commodus, Caracalla, and Heliogabalus adored Isis and Serapis, the Persian Mithras and the Syrian deities. During the last days of the Republic the number of gods and sacred ceremonies constantly increased until at the

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*"How great in our time is the madness of men! They whisper to the gods most abominable prayers. . . . What they would not have men know, they tell to God—quod scire hominum nolunt, Deo narrant." (Ep. x.)

†Sat. III, 145; XIII, 75; VI, 344.

‡Deorum Concilio.

time of Christ the Imperial City, which, according to Tacitus, "was the common sink into which everything infamous and abominable flowed like a torrent from all quarters of the world" (Annals, Bk. XV, 44), had become glutted with divinities and embarrassed with religious rites, the very names of which were unknown to earlier days. The Christian apologist, Tertullian, charges this multiplying of the gods on the heathen with his usual vehemence, and declares that those deities who had formerly been denied admission to Rome were now worshiped with honor.*

Disbelief in the immortality of the soul had become almost universal. The reasonings of the philosophers usually ended with a denial or an uncertain opinion, and as theoretical doubts with the few become practical unbelief with the many, these negations having filtered down through society, were not long in producing positive effects upon the beliefs of the people.

Among the Athenians, long prior to the advent of the gospel, the doctrine of a future state had become a matter of speculation. The poets had sung the early faith of mankind, but many philosophers either ridiculed the form or denied the truths which the poets had immortalized in verse, and the multitude soon learned to treat them as unconsoling and baseless fables. Plato could give no sure word. Aristotle

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*The Consuls Piso and Gabinus had forbidden the worship of Serapis and Isis and Arpocrates, with their dog-headed friend, Anubis, and had overthrown their altars and expelled them from the country. See the spirited passage in the sixth chapter of the "Apology for the Christians."

wavered in his opinions. In several instances he seems to have retained the ancient belief; but in the Nicomachean Ethics he plainly teaches that death is the most dreadful of all things, the end of all things; and that for him who is dead there remains nothing more, whether of good or of evil. What the doctrine of the Cyreniacs, the Skeptics, and the Epicurean herd was, is well known. Polybius, who died about one hundred and twenty-five years before the birth of Christ, shows that this unbelief in a future state had become in his time a fashion among all classes—a fact not without parallel in modern history.

The influence of Greece upon Roman manners and beliefs was of a most corrupting character, and, as a result, the Romans, no less than the Greeks, had gradually surrendered to the same infidelity. Sixty-three years before Christ, Caius Cæsar solemnly declared in the Senate, on the occasion of the trial of the Catiline conspirators, that death is a repose from calamity, not a torment; and that it puts an end to all the evils to which mortals are subject. Both Cato and Cicero spoke in reply, but neither expressed any disapprobation of Cæsar's bold denial of the soul's immortality,* which, had it not been the senti-

* De Broglie, in his great work, "L'Église et L'Emp. Rom.," speaks of the indignation which Cæsar aroused in the soul of Cato, "en professant des maximes d'irreligion triviale," but it was certainly not on this occasion. Cato barely mentions the denial of Cæsar, and what he did say gave no indication of wrath. The truth is that the intelligent classes of that period had lost faith in everything but the grandeur and destiny of Rome. Compare Sallust, Bell. Catil., c. 51, 52; Cicero in Catil., iv, 4, 5.

ment of the Assembly, he would have been too politic to make, since he was at that time, by virtue of his office, chief pontiff of the State religion, the high-priest of Rome, the interpreter of the wills of the gods. In the First Book of the Tusculan Disputations, Cicero testifies to the universal unbelief. He affirms that there were crowds of augurs who denied the immortality of the soul, "and that not only Epicureans, whom I regard very little, but, somehow or other, almost every man of letters." Seneca confessed: "I once flattered myself with the expectation of a future state, because I believed others" (Ep. 102); and in Epistle 55 it will be seen that his hope lay in a return to non-existence. Horace, in the splendid days of Augustus, wrote to his friend Sextius: "Presently shall night oppress thee, and the ghosts of fable and the gloomy mansion of Pluto." (Odes, Bk. I, 4. See also Virgil, Geog. II, 490–492.) The well-known lines of Juvenal show that the old faith was dead in the hearts of the men of that age, who were without God or hope in the world.

> "That there are many ghosts and subterranean realms,
> And a boat-pole, and black frogs in the Stygian Gulf,
> And that so many thousands press over in one boat,
> Not even boys believe."

With this loss of faith in a superintending Providence, in a life after death, and the consequent disbelief in the punishment of vice and the reward of virtue, heathenism sunk into the lowest depths of sensuality, deeper than which it was not possible for man to go. "There will be nothing," says Juvenal, "which posterity can add to our morals. Those

born after us will desire and do the same things. Every vice stands on the summit." The voluptuousness, the sensual vices, and the profound infidelity of Greece had destroyed the hardy virtues of an earlier age, and what the corrupt influences of Greece might have failed to produce, the enervating manners of the East brought to the blossom. The Orontes flowed into the Tiber, as the stern satirist of the time wrote, and no lasciviousness, no vice, no impure rite or ceremony of Eastern nations was unknown to the citizens of Rome.* The Orient, with its mysteries, its magic, its talismans, its astrologies, its bizarre gods, its bloody practices, its veiled women, had produced such a state of immorality as no historian has yet ventured or should attempt to describe.

It is not my purpose to write a history of the morals of that age, but to show what were the producing causes of the frightful condition of childhood in heathenism when Christianity began its mission of mercy and beneficence; how that the decay of family life, through the frequency of divorce and the increase of licentiousness, and the consequent neglect of children, the cruelty practiced upon them, the contempt in which they were held, in utter disregard of the natural feelings of the heart, were all owing to a dis-

* Rénan's description of the morals of Antioch would apply, with little change, to the Rome of that period. "La légèreté syrienne, le charlatanisme babylonien, toutes les impostures de l'Asia, se confondant á cette limite des deux mondes avaient fait d'Antioche la capitale du mesonge, la sentine de toutes les infamies . . . ce flueve de boue qui, sortant par l'embouchure de l'Oronte, venait inonder Rome, avait là sa source principale." (Les Apôtres, p. 218, ††.)

belief in God, to a complete surrender of the spirit to the deified lusts of the heart, and to an abandonment of hope in a future life.

In the history of modern Europe we have seen the consequence of unbelief upon the morals of the people, upon the family, and so upon the religious care and education of childhood. Jean Jacques Rousseau* had critically estimated the effect of skepticism upon society when he wrote concerning atheism the terrible sentence: "Its principles do not kill men, they hinder them from being born, in destroying the manners which multiply them, in detaching them from their species, in reducing all their affections to a secret egoism as fatal to population as to virtue." As in France, during the Revolution, when the teachings of the Encyclopedists bore their fruit; as in England, when deism was fashionable among all classes; and as in Germany, during the Rationalistic period—so was it in the Roman society of the age now under consideration. The effect of philosophical skepticism, the development of an intense eagerness for things of the

* Emile, Bk. IV, Œuvres de Rousseau, Vol. IX. The condition of France at the present time may be in some measure understood from the following; no other commentary on Rousseau's words need be written: "In 1886 there were over six thousand less marriages in France than in 1887, while there were nearly two thousand more divorces. In the Department of the Seine there was one divorce for each four hundred families. The birth-rate has gone back well-nigh twenty thousand, and since 1884 the receding current has been on the increase. There are nearly one hundred and fifty thousand less children now than four years ago. But illegitimate births are on the increase. In the same Department the ratio was twenty-five per cent." (Methodist Review, Jan., 1890, p. 132.)

flesh, the consequent multiplicity of divinities and the concomitant increase of superstition and despair,—all tended, by the working of inevitable law, to destroy the early feelings of respect for marriage and the ideas of sanctity with which the family was once invested; to minimize its value, and so to bring about a shameful looseness of the marriage bond; a contempt for children, as a misfortune to be avoided; an intensification of "secret egoism," and its fruit—relentless cruelty.

The family was once sacred among the Romans. For five hundred and twenty years from the founding of the city, divorce was unknown. But in the time of Augustus celibacy became the fashion; marriage was lightly esteemed, and to such an alarming extent had licentiousness undermined this foundation of the State, that laws were enacted by which rewards were conferred upon those who were married and had become parents, and punishments by fines and disabilities inflicted upon all who obstinately remained single.* Horace, the poet, next to Virgil, of that age wrote: "The times, fertile in wickedness, have in the first place polluted the marriage state and [thence] the issue and the families. From this fountain perdition has overwhelmed the nation and the people."† Seneca writes that the women indulged in divorce

* Tacitus, Annals, Bk. III, xxv. The historian goes on to state that the Julian Laws were ineffectual; to be without heirs was still considered as a condition that gave great advantages. Compare his Manners of the Germans, xviii. The usual works on Roman history will furnish much literature. See also Lecky's History of European Morals.

† Odes, Bk. III, 6.

through mere wantonness, and that they counted the years, not by the number of the consuls, but by the number of their rejected husbands—*non consulum numero sed maritorum annos suos computant.** Juvenal satirizes the women who divorced themselves so often that they wore out their bridal veils; and another poet hurls his shaft at the iniquity of the time and the facility for divorce when he says that thirteen days after the revival of the Julian Law for the restraint of immorality, Thalisina had already married her tenth husband.† Well might Tertullian say concerning the women of that age: "As for divorce, they long for it; they long for it as though it were the natural consequence of marriage."‡

Virtue had not fled, however, from womankind. The domestic life of France in the times of Louis XIV and his successor would never be judged by the brilliant but immoral coterie *dames du palace* which disgraced their courts and made possible the Revolution. Among the higher classes of Rome, as also in the middle and lower walks of life, there were many who still cherished those virtues which are of more value to the world than its philosophy and its acquisitions of science and increase of wealth—virtues which underlie all civilization, and without which national life is impossible. But it can not be ignored that at this period family life was despised by the majority, and a life of gayety and profligacy substituted for it by women of the first rank in Roman society. It is

* De Benef., III, 6. † Martial, Epigram 7, Bk. VI.
‡ Apolog., 6.

a remarkable fact in the history of morals that to such a degree had the licentiousness of the times increased, that the Senate was compelled to pass severe laws, in forlorn hope that the frightful torrent of iniquity among women might be stayed.*

In such a condition of society † it is difficult to suppose that there would be such a thing as a profound recognition of the natural rights of childhood; or that the nurture of children in the principles of morality and religion would be considered an imperative duty. Not that there was a universal and absolute neglect of children. Not that mankind had entered into a conspiracy of hate against them, for there were fathers and mothers everywhere who cherished with beautiful affection the love of their children, and, superior to their religion and the corrupting influences about them, threw around the feebleness of childhood that instinctive love which Providence has imbedded in human nature for helpless infancy. But while this was so, society was organized on such principles that, outside the natural sentiment which might rule in the heart of the parent, there could be no recognition of the priceless value of the child as an immortal being. "The customs, legislations, and spirit of society were not even a defense for life itself in its earlier years; and the character-

*Tacitus, Annals, II, 85. See also Uhlhorn, Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism; and compare Gibbon's Decline and Fall, chapter xxiii, for a view of morals prevalent in this age.

†See Geikie, Life of Christ, chapter xxxvii; Farrar's Early Days of Christianity, chapter i.

istic tone of literature, as it was carried at that very time toward almost its highest historical development, shows how haughtily careless society was, in what we call the classic ages, of what to us appear its imperative and primary duty. Care for the child, when required at all, was so only because of the citizenship which was about to be his."* Lust and Hate go hand in hand, and the world's history only too clearly demonstrates that an age in which unbelief and profligacy of manners usurp the heroic virtues of chaste living and sober thinking, is also an age of bestiality and cruelty. The "secret egoism" of Rousseau is intense selfishness, which in its last analysis is the essence of all evil, as love is the fountain of all good.

It was not in Rome only that indifference towards childhood was prevalent, nor was such inhumanity wholly owing to the universal corruption of the age or the extreme poverty of the lower classes. Heathenism could produce nothing better. Whenever and wherever heathenism came to the flower, it tended to repress the better instincts of humanity; for, by developing the passions of men through the reflex influence of the worship they offered to the gods, it could not do other than produce an insensibility to human suffering, as the butcheries of the amphitheaters testify to the callousness of the age, and a terrible cruelty, or at least indifference, toward helpless childhood. "The exposition of children," says Gibbon, "was the prevailing and stubborn vice of antiquity.

*The Divine Origin of Christianity, p. 141; R. S. Storrs, D. D., LL. D., New York.

It was sometimes prescribed, often permitted, almost always practiced with impunity, by the nations which never entertained the Roman ideas of paternal power; and the dramatic poets who appeal to the human heart, represent with indifference a popular custom, which was palliated by the motive of economy and compassion. If the father could subdue his own feelings, he might escape, though not the censure, at least the chastisement of the laws; and the Roman Empire was stained with the blood of infants, till such murders were included by Valentinian and his colleagues, in the letter and spirit of the Cornelian law." *

But the exposure of children was not the only

* It will be remembered, however, that at this time the humanizing influence of Christianity had, to some extent, permeated the empire. One would think that either Guizot or Milman would have annotated the sentence following the third note in chapter xliv, where Gibbon refers to the humanity of Paulus. If I remember correctly, this occurred under Severus, when Christianity had already been in the world for two hundred and twenty-five years. "Now, it was one of the most important services of Christianity, that, besides quickening greatly our benevolent affections, it definitely and dogmatically asserted the sinfulness of all destruction of human life as a matter of amusement, or of simple convenience, and thereby formed a new standard higher than any which then existed in the world. The influence of Christianity in this respect began with the very earliest stage of human life. The practice of abortion was one to which few persons in antiquity attached any deep feeling of condemnation. . . . No law in Greece, or in the Roman Republic, or during the greater part of the Empire, condemned it (see on the views of Aristotle, Latourt, *Recherches historiques sur les Enfants trouvés*, Paris, 1848, p. 9); and if, as has been thought, some measure was adopted condemnatory of it before the close of the Pagan Empire, that measure was altogether inoperative." (History of European Morals, W. E. H. Lecky, M. A., p. 20.)

form in which the dehumanizing influence of heathenism manifested itself. The sacrificing of children was common to nearly all the nations of antiquity. And what is still worse, not only were they offered as were other human sacrifices on the altars of the Dii Majores, the greater gods of the national Pantheons, but in the East, in process of time, it was not uncommon for them to be brought up to the vilest uses in the rites of sensual worship.

Of all the ancient forms of idolatry that of Moloch, the Phœnician god of the destructive principle in nature, was the most revolting. To him children were publicly sacrificed. At Carthage he was worshiped as Saturn, the same who in Roman mythology was portrayed as devouring his own children. This worship, with the obscene rites of his divine paramour, became familiar at an early date to all the nations of the East. Moloch was represented by a colossal brazen image of a seated human figure, with a bull's head and outstretched arms ever ready to receive the offerings. Into these open arms, the bodies of little children and infants were thrown, whence they rolled off into a glowing furnace beneath. On the day appointed, mothers brought their little ones, and, lest the frantic cries of these should detract from their value as sacrifices, kissed and caressed them until their turn came, when they were taken by the priest and flung into the furnace; the drums and trumpets meanwhile beating and shrieking to drown the pitiful cries of the helpless victims.* The Christian writers

* Among the Romans the fable was that Ops (works), the wife of Saturn (time), hid Jupiter among the Corybantes on

of the first centuries exhausted the possibilities of language in giving vent to their horror at such barbarities. "I can not find language," says Lactantius, "to speak of the infants who were immolated to the same Saturn, on account of his hatred of Jupiter. To think that men were so barbarous, so savage that they gave the name of sacrifice to the slaughter of their own children; that is, to a deed foul, and to be held in detestation by the human race; since without any regard to parental affection, they destroyed tender and innocent lives at an age which is especially pleasing to parents, and surpassed in brutality the savageness of all beasts, which (savage as they are) still love their offspring." †

The worship of Moloch prevailed among all the tribes of Canaan and of Syria, and among the Carthaginians, who brought it from Phœnicia, their mother country.

It was the custom in ancient Carthage and elsewhere, in times of sore distress or public calamity of any kind, for the rulers of the city to sacrifice the best beloved of their children as a propitiatory offering to the avenging cities. El, the highest god in the Carthaginian calendar, once placed his own son on the altar, and slew him with his own hand. Having such an example constantly before them, the people would not be slow to imitate it, for pious or political rea-

Mount Ida, lest Saturn should devour him, as he had her other children. It was the custom of the Corybantes to beat drums and cymbals while the sacrifices were offered, and the noise of the instruments prevented Saturn from hearing the cries of the infant Jupiter.

† The Divine Institutes, chapter xxi, Clark's Ed.

sons, when the wrath of the gods rested on their devoted city. Lactantius* narrates that the Carthaginians offered human sacrifices to Saturn, and that, when they were conquered by Agathocles, the king of the Sicilians, believing that god to be angry with them, they immolated on his altars as an expiation two hundred sons of the nobles. These boys were taken instead of those youths who were brought up for this purpose of sacrifice, because it was discovered that many families, influenced more by natural affection than religious fear, had secreted their offspring. But such was the terrible effect of this great sacrifice upon the minds of the people that, instead of producing a reaction against such a cruel divinity, an uncontrollable frenzy, easily explainable, took possession of them, and three hundred boys were brought forth and offered up as free-will offerings to the implacable deity. This mode of worship continued there until it was abolished by the Roman arms under the proconsul Tiberius. He made several attempts to suppress it without success, until finally, making a dread example in true Roman fashion, he hung the priests of these bloody rites on the trees of their sacred grove.

To this same worship, which, as stated, the Carthaginians derived from the Phœnicians, the Hebrew people were constantly exposed from their first settlement in Canaan. In Leviticus xviii, 21, is the statute: "Thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Moloch." Also in chapter xx: "And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, Again thou shalt say

* Instit. I, xxi; Rawlinson, The Religions of the Ancient World, p. 156; Tertull., Apolog., ix.

to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Moloch, he shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones." But this commandment, like many others, was violated when the nation fell into idolatry. Among the many iniquities listed in Psalm cvi against the early Israelites is this very crime of offering their children to Moloch: "But they were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols, which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and they shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood."

That these idols of Canaan were fire-gods, and so were worshiped by purifications through fire, human sacrifices, offering of the first-born, and other inhuman rites, is beyond question. In 1 Kings xi, 7, we read that Solomon, having his heart turned by his *Ammonite* wives, set up, no doubt from political reasons, the "abomination of the children of Ammon" on the Mount of Olives. In Jeremiah vii, 31, reference is made to the Hebrew worship of Moloch, and in chapter xix, 5, it is written: "They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt-offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind." Similar allusions will be found in Ezekiel xvi, 20, 21, 26; xxxiii, 37.

These passages prove those critics to be in error

who, following the lead of R. Kimchi and Maimonides,* supposed that the children were not consumed, but "passed through" and returned to the parents. For as Hengstenberg observes on Ezekiel xvi, 24: "That the consequence of this passing through was death, appears from the foregoing words, 'Thou didst slay them,' and also from the phrase 'to devour' in verse 20. The passing through was the mode of slaying." This is evident from 2 Kings xvii, 17: "And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire." (R. V.) But the most remarkable passage is 2 Chronicles xxviii, 3, where the iniquity of Ahaz is described: "Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after *the abominations of the nations* whom Jehovah had driven out before the children of Israel." (See the parallel passage, 2 Kings xvi, 3.) During the revival under Josiah the self-mutilated priests of the obscene rites, who had found lodgment near the temple of Jehovah, were "put down;" the houses of the Kedoshim, where the women wove curtains for the Asherah, were broken in pieces; the worship of Ashtoreth, during which mothers flung their children from the walls of the temple, and were afterwards gathered up and placed upon the sacrificial altar,† was abolished. "And he defiled Tophet, which is in the valley of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Moloch." (2 Kings xxiii, 10.)

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* More Nevochim, Eng. Trans. under title "Guide of the Perplexed," Vol. II, Heb. Lit. Soc.

† Geikie, Hours with the Bible.

It is evident from these passages that the practice of sacrificing children to Moloch, or Milcom, or Melech, as this god is variously called, was wide-spread among all the nations of the East. In 2 Kings xviii, 31, we find that the Sepharvites, a nation who were settled in Samaria by the king of Assyria on the removal of the Israelites to that country, were addicted to this worship. Dr. Adam Clarke thinks that these Sepharvites probably came from the cities of the Medes. Rawlinson says:* "The chief seats of the sun-god's worship in Chaldea appear to have been the two famous cities of Larsa (Ellasar?) and Sippara. . . . At Sippara the worship of the sun-god was so predominant that Abydenus, probably following Berosus, calls the town Heliopolis. There can be little doubt that the Adrammelech, or 'Fire-king,' whose worship the Sepharvites (the people of Sippara) introduced into Samaria, was this deity." This much is certain, that when they came into Samaria they brought this worship with them. "And the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of the Sepharvaim." (2 Kings xviii, 31.)

Among the ancient Greeks we find the same perversion of human instincts. Plutarch is authority for the statement that, according to the laws of Lycurgus, which prevailed in Lacedæmon, the father not being allowed to do as he pleased with his newly born infant, was compelled to bring him to a place called the Apothetae, where were certain ones appointed to examine all children brought before them. The duty

* Ancient Monarchies, Vol. I, p. 127.

of these examiners was carefully to note the physical condition of the infant, and if it was found perfect a certain share of land was allotted to it. But if it was in any manner deformed, or had a weak constitution, it was condemned and thrown into a deep chasm at the base of Mt. Taygetus, to be devoured by wild beasts or birds of prey. Plutarch finds no fault with this; rather does he, at the close of his Life of Lycurgus, pass a eulogy on the wisdom and equity of his laws. At Sparta, originally, a man was sacrificed in the rites celebrating the honor of Diana Orthia; but Lycurgus substituted for this the whipping of boys at her altar. The whipping was performed in the severest manner; and, lest compassion should enter the heart of the flogger, a priest stood by holding in his hand a statuette of the goddess, which became insupportable if the blows became less frequent or lost their fierceness. The parents exhorted the sufferer to endure bravely that to him a monument might be raised, and much honor for having such a son be given to them. Tenderness and love were stifled in the human breast; for the boys were often whipped to death, as at the altar of Bacchus in Arcadia young girls were beaten to death with rods.*

The practice of exposing children to beasts was not confined to Lacedæmon. It was prevalent in many other parts of Greece, and more or less resorted to in all nations. The most eminent philosophers of antiquity, some of whom in these days of religious eclecticism are cited as competitors with Jesus, who

* Potter's Greek Antiquities, Vol. I, p. 193.

raised an altar of Pity in every Christian heart advocated the inhuman practice in their writings. Socrates even in the "*Thetetus*," is made by Plato to speak in a slighting manner of the sorrows of mothers when their infants were taken from them. Aristotle declares in his *Politics** that a law should be made prohibiting the bringing up of any child maimed or of unsound constitution; and that when the laws of a country forbade the exposition of children, there should be a limit to the number born. But if, as might be the case, the number should be reached, the probability of increasing it should be destroyed by resorting to what is practically prenatal murder. Plato is of the same opinion.† In his Republic wives are held in common, and their children are also common. No parent is to know his own child, and no child shall know his parent. He would not have children born after the parents have passed a certain age. Such children must not be allowed to see the light, but if born they should be exposed. "As respects then," he ordains, "the children of worthy persons, I think, they should convey them to some retirement, to certain nurses dwelling apart in a certain quarter of the city; but as for the children of the more depraved, or such of the rest as may be maimed or lame, they will hide them as is right, in some secret and obscure place." In another place‡ he speaks of educating the children of good parents, and of secretly dispersing the children of bad parents among the other citizens.

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* Book VII, 16. † Republic, V, 457. ‡ Timaeus, 18, 19.

Of the unnatural vice paederastia, so common among the Greeks that Cicero, in his Tusculan Disputations, shows it to have been indulged in by philosophers, poets, and learned men, nothing must be said. On that crime the Apostle in his Epistle to the Romans has fixed his indelible brand.*

Such then was the tenderness, the respect and the sacredness which heathenism produced for childhood in Greece. Nor shall we find any thing much dissimilar in the civilization which succeeded it. The historian Dionysius Halicarnassus informs us, in his book on Roman Antiquities, that Romulus, the founder of the Roman State, compelled the citizens to rear all their male children and the first-born of the females. From this it is inferred all females might be destroyed but the eldest. If the male children were deformed, the parents were allowed to expose them after showing them to five of their neighbors as witnesses, no doubt, to their deformity or feeble constitution. Cicero, in the third book of his

*The vigorous language of Dr. Döllinger will convey to the student a vivid picture of heathen morality. "Bei den Griechen tritt das Laster der Paederastie mit allen Symptomen einer grossen nationalen Krankheit, gleichsam eines ethischen Miasma auf; es zeigt sich als ein Gefühl, das stärker und heftiger wirkte als die Weiberliebe bei andern Völkern, massloser, leidenschaftlicher in seinen Ausbrüchen war. Rasende Eifersucht, unbedingte Hingebung, sinnliche Gluth, zärtliche Tändelei, nächtliches Weilen vor der Thüre des Geliebten. Alles, was zur Carricatur der natürlichen Geschlechtsliebe gehört, findet sich dabei. . . . In der ganzen Literatur der vorchristlichen Periode ist kaum ein Schriftsteller zu finden, der sich entschieden dagegen erklärt hatte." (Heidenthum und Judenthum, p. 684, ff.) See also C. Schmidt's Essai historique sur la Soc. dans le mond romaine, Paris, 1853.

"Laws," has been interpreted as teaching that this law of Romulus for destroying children was confirmed by the celebrated Twelve Tables, the foundation of Roman Jurisprudence. Merivale* says that these Tables continued unabated at least in theory to a late period of the Empire. According to the Fourth Table, the father of a family had complete control of his child in all matters of life and death. To understand fully the significance of such a law, it is necessary that one should remember that according to Roman Law the family rested upon a civil basis rather than upon the ties of religion. The wife was considered in law as a daughter, and like the children was not a person (*persona*), but a thing (*res*), for a person was one having or capable of having rights. But the wife had no rights, the children had no rights. At the head of the family stood the *paterfamilias* alone. He was subject to none. He did not represent the family, he was the family, since outside of him the members had no legal existence. He was *sui juris*, all other members of the family were *alieni juris* since they, his wife, his children, children's children and slaves were his property. The head of the Roman family possessed supreme power over every member of it. He could do as he pleased with his children without fear of law, he acted rather under its protection. This authority was known as the *Patria Potestas*. By virtue of this law the infant could be exposed, the child scourged, imprisoned for life, kept at hard labor with the slaves, or sold into perpetual servitude. In pro-

* Conversion of the Roman Empire, Note Q, p. 221.

cess of time the position of the child was ameliorated, but it was not until the accession of Constantine that the father was condemned for killing his offspring.* It is Gibbon,† who, usually gilding the darker features of heathenism with a choice but specious vocabulary, says: "At the call of indigence or avarice, the master of a family could dispose of his children or his slaves. But the condition of the slave was far more advantageous, since he regained by the first manumission, his alienated freedom; the son was again restored to his unnatural father; he might be condemned to servitude a second and a third time, and it was not till after the third sale and deliverance, that he was enfranchised from the domestic power which had been so repeatedly abused. . . . The majesty of a parent was armed with the power of life and death, and the examples of such bloody executions which were sometimes praised and never punished, may be traced in the annals of Rome beyond the times of Pompey and Augustus."‡ It was the Emperor Claudius who ordered his own daughter to be stripped and exposed. Octavius, the father of Augustus, once determined to take the life of his infant son because a certain Senator had predicted for the boy future supremacy over the world

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* Institutes of Justinian, Sandars, London, 1859, pp. 28, 30, 102.

† Decline and Fall, chapter xliv.

‡ For the laws on this subject see D. of Halicarnassus, *Antiq.* Lib. II; Ulp. *Fragm.* t. x. No. 1; Caius *Conn.* Lib. I, 132. Byncker Shöek *de jure occid. liberos*, Cap. 6. Thomasius *dissert. tit. Inst. de patria potest.*, C. 1; referred to by M. Troplong, l'Influen. d. Christ, 264.

as master of Rome. The teachings of Plato and of Aristotle, the example of other nations and certain fables of the gods, as that concerning Jupiter and Ganymede, found a congenial soil in the debauchery of the period when Christianity came among men as the nursing mother of children Cicero bears witness to the severity of the age just preceding the advent of Christ, and Terence,* the author of that sublime sentence *Homo sum, nihil a me alienum puto,* which is far in advance of certain Christian ethics of our own day, presented in the theater at Rome a play in which figured a character, who, having commanded his wife to expose their infant daughter, flies into a passion because she had given the child to a woman by which means the infant had escaped death. Seneca,† a contemporary of St. Paul, like other philosophers referred to, saw no crime in the exposition and murder of children, but on the contrary defended such iniquities in the following manner: "We destroy mad dogs," says he, "we even kill a fierce and unmanageable ox, and into sick sheep we let drive the iron lest they should infest the flock; we destroy the life of unnatural offspring (*portentosos fetus*); and in like manner we drown children if they are born disabled or monstrous." Such were the sentiments of a philosopher whose writings contain the loftiest utterances and the final word, not forgetting the thoughts of

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* Heut., act iv, scene 1.

† De Ira, Lib. I, xv; also De Benef., III, 31. See Quintilian Dec., 306, VI; also Pliny Nat. Hist., Book XXVIII, chapter ii, where he speaks of those who hunt for the brains and marrow of infants.

Marcus Aurelius, of that philosophy which perhaps alone of all ancient systems still awakens in us the profoundest interest. But if such were the views of a Seneca, who, notwithstanding his glaring inconsistencies is considered as being of "an ardent and generous temperament, of far-sighted and sincere humanity," what must have been the moral attitude of the unthinking masses of the empire?

With this view of the condition of childhood in heathenism before us, and knowing Christianity as we now know it, it is an interesting question to consider, *What are the antecedent probabilities that the early Church would or would not throw around the children the same influence which she exerted on all who accepted the doctrines she taught?* Is it probable that when heathen parents were received into the Church their children were rejected? If so, we might ask, what would have been the regenerating influence of Christianity on society? *Would the Church have permitted herself to be allied with the heathen principle that the child was of value only for what it might become politically?* It might occur to one that perhaps, and as a matter of fact, the Church did hold the children of believers in the same relation to herself as do Antipedobaptist denominations at the present day in heathen lands. But to conclude this, would be to inject the subtle refinement of an illogical theology of the Middle Ages into the simple belief of a people who never dreamed that Christianity was a philosophical system like those taught by the philosophers in the schools, which must be bolstered by technical definitions of a microscopical sort; nor did they imagine that

it was like those systems in that one must have reached a degree of intellectuality before he could enroll himself as a disciple of the Divine Master. The Apostle to the heathen had declared, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, that the children of the converted heathen were holy, and not only did that announcement forever make impossible the exposure or cruel treatment by Christians of their children, it threw around the cradle of every believer's infant the aureole of sanctity; and until that child voluntarily renounced the religion in which he was born, he was held as consecrated to God. *The reasons on which Antipedobaptists base the salvation of infants dying in infancy were just the very reasons why the Church of the apostolic age gathered the children within her sacred fold and kept them from the pollution of the world.* In no instance do we read of the children of converted heathen—that is, of those born after the parents had become Christians—presenting themselves for membership in the household of faith. They were so, or were so regarded from the day of their birth.

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTIANITY AND CHILDHOOD.

FROM a careful study of the state of the heathen world at the coming of Christ, as sketched in the preceding chapter, it is evident that no religion which did not rise immeasurably above the religions and philosophies of that period in its conception of man, of the family, and in its estimate of the inherent value of children, could have maintained its ground, much less conquer an empire, in the face of the almost insurmountable difficulties which crowded around the infant Church from the persecution under Nero to the accession of Constantine. Christianity without its peculiar humanitarianism, which was that of its Divine Founder, and which was in its idea and scope wholly dissimilar from the sentimentalism of the philosophers, would have doubtless seemed to the masses of the empire as an exalted development of Stoicism, or as a refined system of morals worthy of admiration, but too far removed in its cold beauty from the social sympathies, parental cares, and every-day needs of the common people. A religion which stood in no vital relation to childhood could not have wielded other than a limited influence on society or the family. Had the Apostolic Church simply thrown around the child its general teachings on the sacredness of human life as a gift of God, it would have been in this re-

spect but little superior to the laws of the empire, which forbade the exposure of children. Had it exerted itself in simply caring for those who had been deserted by their parents; in providing for poor boys and girls; in awakening a sense of compassion, and of developing in the bosom of that hard age a tenderness toward helpless infancy, it would have done no more than Trajan and Pliny and Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, and others did, or attempted to do; for the stoic emperor, Aurelius, committed to the care of a prætor an institution for the guardianship of orphans. The Christian Church of that period must be something more than a foundling hospital. Various systems competed with it for the supremacy, and it must prove itself to be not simply a raft to which the strongest might cling, but the very Ark of God, which could preserve every believing family from the awful flood of corruption which every one saw was fast devouring the empire.

To both the Greek and the Roman, who became members of the Church, Christianity must have appeared as well adapted to the family as to the adult individual, and in a sense really more so, not only in that the family was first in influence and importance as the foundation of the State, but also from the fact that with them, as with all nations, religion ever had a domestic basis. The acknowledged Epistles of the Apostle Paul demonstrate in many places his acquaintance with Roman law, as in Romans viii, 14, 21, where the reference is to the law of adoption, which "was an essentially Roman usage, and was intimately connected with the Roman ideas of the family. The

maintenance of the *sacra privata*, the domestic rites of the family, was regarded by the Romans as a matter of deep political importance, and their law accordingly described minutely the forms under which, in default of natural heirs, the paterfamilias might thus prospectively secure it." Closely connected with this law, and indeed the foundation of it, was the law *Patria Potestas*. It is to this law also that the Apostle refers as an illustration of his doctrine of deliverance from the "bondage of corruption." For, as already stated, according to this law the father had supreme control of his child, born or adopted, in every affair of life; the family was his absolute property. He did not so much represent it as he absorbed it in his own person and acts. And, while this can not be pressed too far for polemic purposes in concluding that every adult member of a family was forced into or accepted in the Church on the will and authority of the paterfamilias who became a believer, yet nevertheless it is most reasonable that the younger members would be enrolled with the parent, the whole becoming a Christian family.

This phase of the question has been strangely overlooked by writers on this subject—I mean the agreement of the spirit of Christianity with the Roman ideas of domestic religion. How the gospel, as we understand its teachings, and as announced by the Apostle Peter at Pentecost, harmonized with the Hebrew ideas of the position of children in the covenant of Abraham is well known. And there is nothing strange in the belief that, for the divine purposes of the ages to come, Providence had permitted this

peculiar development of Roman Jurisprudence until the "fullness of times" had come, and more than permitted the establishment of the Roman religion, heathen as it was, upon the foundation of the family. No other nation had these laws of adoption, except the Galatians. In the Epistle to the Christians of that Province there is direct allusion to the *patria potestas* in chapter iv, ver. 1. With these facts in mind, we can understand in a fuller and clearer manner than before the *significance of household baptisms in the New Testament.* In the most natural manner the author of the Acts records these baptisms. There is no remark, no explanation; the simple fact, as a matter of course, is recorded only; for doubtless at this time the Roman ideas of the family had become general, and were more or less adopted in the provinces where proconsuls were stationed or Roman colonies had been established. The New Testament writers are true to the times in which they wrote, and it is only by an adequate knowledge of the manners, customs, and laws of those times that we can hope fully to understand what was familiar to those for whom the evangelists and others immediately wrote. To what extent these ideas prevailed in Greece and Asia Minor I shall not now attempt to determine; but since the adoption of children is alluded to in the Epistles to the Ephesians, and since Ephesus was the capital of the Province, and the proconsul had his court there, it is certain that the Roman law was not unknown in that region.

To the Jews of Palestine and those of the Dispersion, scattered everywhere from Babylon to Rome,

a Christianity which would have excluded children from the Church would have seemed from that unprecedented fact to have carried with it its own refutation, its own denial of its Divine origin. Among the Hebrews, from the days of Abraham, children were looked upon as a special blessing from Jehovah, and as included in all the promises made to Israel. Hence they received, when but eight days old, the seal of the Abrahamic covenant, which was to Israel an everlasting covenant; they were taught the law, were members of the synagogue, of the Kahal or great assembly of Jehovah's chosen, and united with their parents in the memorial services of the Passover, and the solemn worship of the temple. To have cut the children off from the earthly kingdom of the Messiah which was the culmination of long ages of prophecy, and for the establishment of which in the fullness of time Israel itself had been brought into existence,— this to the Hebrews in every nation must have appeared not simply an insoluble mystery, but a providential test of the Divine claims of the new religion.

Further, had the Apostolic Church been a Church of adults only, it never could, from all that is implied in the foregoing, have realized in that age, as it did, the complete New Testament idea of the Christian family.* It never could have so sanctified the marriage relation, as the writings and discipline of the early Church show to have been the case; nor could it have developed the unheard-of idea of the sacredness of childhood, as that idea was fostered among the

* See Canon Farrar's Witness of History to Christ, p. 182, Macmillan.

primitive Christians, the catacombs of Rome bearing witness; from the fact that, being a society of adults only, it would have had no other than a prospective interest in the family, and therefore its influence in building and protecting the family would have been reduced to the lowest degree. This much is certain, that from the days of the Apostles to the close of the Middle Ages not one sentence can be found against the Church membership of believers' children in all the literature of that long period of fifteen hundred years.* But, on the contrary, the writings of eminent leaders of the Church in various countries, the acts of Councils, the decisions of Provincial Synods, the constant practice of the Church, East and West, and among the remotest tribes of Northern Europe, whither the gospel was carried (in some instances by Christians from the East, as in the case of Ulphilas, the apostle of the Goths, whose family belonged to one of the Churches in Cappadocia), all bear unbroken testimony to the fact of child-membership in the Church. It was left to the superior knowledge in divine things of certain fanatics who arose during the Reformation period to discover for the first time Scriptural reasons for excluding children from baptism, and from membership in the body of Christ. As a matter of history, it is to such a source that the ecclesiastical ban upon childhood owes its origin; for the arguments which

* In this statement I have not forgotten the effort of Tertullian to have the baptism of children delayed. This is not the same as rejecting them from membership in the Church, since owing to the novel views of the efficacy of baptism, many who were believers put off baptism as long as they could.

are now used in support of such views have nothing answering thereto in any age or among any people prior to that time of convulsion and change.*

The early Church came into direct conflict with the various religions which were mutually tolerant throughout the empire, and by its sublime utterances concerning God, sin, and redemption, gave to man a new dignity, made divorce well-nigh criminal, exalted the marriage state,† and by its purifying and ennobling influence on all relations and conditions of life emphasized more and more the inherent value of the child, his position in the Church, his relation to the saving doctrines which were preached in all the world to the saving of the nations. Christ had been born of a woman. The Divine Infant was the Redeemer of infants. He had taken infants to his bosom, had laid his hands upon them in benediction, had declared by his sovereign authority that they were of the kingdom of heaven, and had identified himself with them in the remarkable words, "Whosoever shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me."

The facts were in the possession of the first Christians, and the early Church dared not repeat the folly of the disciples whom Jesus rebuked for attempting to exclude the children from his presence, his touch, his attention, teaching, and prayer. The heathen world was offering its children at this very time to Moloch, to Saturn; exposing them on the highways, or bring-

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*Mosheim, Vol. II, Cent. 16, Part II, c. 3; Benedict's History of Baptism, pp. 44, 45, 46.

†Min. Fel., Octav., c. 31; Just. Mart., Apol., I, s. 29; Athenag., Leg. pro Christ., s. 33; Clem., Strom., III, c. i.

ing them up for vile purposes in the licentious worship of the gods, when prompted by motives of lust, or gain, or economy. Against the iniquities practiced upon childhood the Christian writers and apologists of the Ante-Nicene period uttered their vigorous protests, in the name of God and humanity. Thus Justin Martyr (A. D., 114–165): "But as for us, we have been taught that to expose newly born babes is the part of wicked men; and this we have been taught, lest we should do any one an injury, and lest we should sin against God; because we see that almost all so exposed (not only girls, but also the males) are brought up to prostitution." Athenagoras, in his Plea for the Christians, presented to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, lays down with unsparing hand the enormities of the heathen in their treatment of the young. Minucius Felix, who lived in the same reign, and is said by Jerome to have been an advocate at Rome prior to his conversion, also exposes the crimes of the age in its terrible neglect and even contempt for the little ones, and the inhumanity displayed in sacrificing them to idols. Tertullian (A. D. 193–216), who lived in Carthage, where, as we have seen, children were offered up to Saturn, says, after mentioning that fact: "But in regard to child-murder, . . . I shall turn to the people. How many, think you, of those crowding around and gaping for Christian blood—how many, even of your rulers, notable for their justice to you and their severe measures against us, may I charge, in their own consciences, with the sin of putting their offspring to death?" Lactantius, the Christian Cicero, records the same wickedness, and

this same Tertullian, in his Address to the Nations, makes this further charge: "Although you are forbidden by the laws to slay new-born infants, it so happens that no laws are evaded with more impunity or greater safety, with deliberate knowledge of the public and the suffrages of this entire age."

But the Church did not exhaust her interest in children in useless protestations. She converted the parents, and nurtured their children in Christian doctrine. She, in addition to this, took the children of the heathen, when permitted, and trained them in her schools for membership in the Church. Among the earliest writings of the primitive Church is the Epistle of Barnabas. By Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and others, it was attributed to Barnabas the Levite, of Cyprus, the friend and colleague of the Apostle Paul. Hilgenfeld* and other modern critics have decided that it was written at the close of the first century.† In this epistle the Christian is commanded thus: "Thou shalt not slay the child by . . . nor shalt thou destroy it after it is born. Thou shalt not withdraw thy hand from thy son or from thy daughter, *but from their infancy thou shalt teach them the fear of the Lord.*" It is not necessary to refute here the notion that children of believing parents could be instructed in religious duties without becoming, in any sense, Church members; for children took part in the

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*Die Apostolichen Väter, Untersuchungen über Inhalt, u. s. w.

†N'ont pas hésité à y avoir un monument de la théologie du premier âge de l'église, et à lui assigner la date des premières années du second siecle. (Reus. Hist. d. l. Theol. Christ

services of the Church, had certain positions assigned them during worship, and were trained for the office of readers as soon as they could learn to read. That attempts have been made and much learning spoiled in efforts to overthrow these facts, is nothing to the point. Argument, fair and unfair, learned and unlearned, will be brought against them as often as they are stated; but there they are, and there they will will stay, for they can never be successfully disputed.* "The Didache, or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," a treatise of about sixteen pages, discovered in 1875 by Dr. Bryennios, metropolitan of Nicomedia, in Asia Minor, is a most important document for the many references it makes to the sin of child-murder and the corruption of boys. The author was contemporary with Clement, the first bishop of Rome. According to Pro-

*Even if they were catechumens, as all children were in later times, they were regarded, as Bingham (Antiquities, Vol. I, p. 10) shows, as belonging to the Church—"Forasmuch as Eusebius, Origen, and St. Jerome reckon them one of the three orders of the Church, and the Councils of Eliberis and Constantinople give them [the catechumens] expressly the name of Christians." Again he says, page 430, concerning the age at which one might be admitted as catechumen: "The first question concerns only heathen converts; for, as for the children of believing parents, it is certain that as they were baptized in infancy, so they were admitted catechumens as soon as they were capable of learning." How long did one remain such? *At the founding of the Church there was no such class in the Church*, as the cases of the jailer and Lydia and Cornelius prove, but in after ages it became necessary. The time of probation differed with the times. Bingham mentions the fact that children (of believers, no doubt) were admitted before the seventh year. If a catechumen was in danger of dying, he was received among the faithful.

fessors Hitchcock and Brown, editors of the American edition, it belongs to the second century, "possibly as far back as 120 A. D., hardly later than 160 A. D;" that is, about fifty or sixty years after the death of St. John. In the fourth chapter of this interesting manuscript we find almost the identical words quoted above from the Epistle of Barnabas: "Thou shalt not take off thy hand from thy son and from thy daughter, but from youth [νεότητος] thou shalt teach them the fear of the Lord." On this passage we may remark that from the use of the word "youth" some might be ready to conclude that young children were not included; but the word often occurs in the New Testament, denoting the whole period *from infancy* up, as in Matthew xix, 20: "All these things have I kept from my *youth* up." Among the commandments which the young ruler had kept was the fifth—"Honor thy father and thy mother." He was, when speaking to the Lord, a "young man;" and certainly the phrase, "from my youth up," could not have signified a year or two previous, but, *from the days of my infancy until now.* See also Matt. x, 20; Luke xviii, 21; Acts xxvi, 4. The Epistle of Barnabas has "*from their infancy*," but there is no occasion for supposing an interpolation or change in either text. Both prove, in connection with documents, the vital relationship of children to the Church, and the profound solicitude with which their religious instruction was regarded by the believers of that early age. The teaching of both is an echo from the Epistles of St. Paul, in which he admonishes both parents and children.

Justin Martyr was born in Samaria, about 114 A. D.,

and suffered martyrdom under Marcus Aurelius, 165 A. D. About the time of the writing of the Didache at Alexandria, the one extreme of the empire as we may say, Justin was composing his Apology at Rome. In this Apology (defense) for the Christians he says: "And many, both men and women, who have been Christ's disciples from childhood remain pure at the age of sixty or seventy years, and I boast that I could produce such from every race of men." The thoughtful reader will not overlook the fact that both the Epistle of Barnabas and the Didache lay stress upon teaching from "*infancy*," and the statement here made that when Justin wrote, there were members in the Church who were made disciples to Christ in their childhood.

Irenæus, who was born before the death of the Apostle John, and who, as he himself tells us, was acquainted with Polycarp, the friend of St. John, also bears testimony to this universal sentiment of the Church; for he is writing from Gaul A. D. 182. In Book II, "Against Heresies," referring to Christ's redemptive work, he writes: "Being a master, therefore he also possessed the age of a master, not despising or evading any condition of humanity, nor setting aside in himself that law which he had appointed for the human race, but sanctifying every age by that period corresponding to it which belonged to himself. For he came to save all through means of himself—all, I say, who through him are born again to God—infants and children, and boys and youths, and old men. He therefore passed through every age, becoming an infant for infants, thus sanc-

tifying infants; a child for children, thus sanctifying those who are of this age, being at the same time made to them an example of piety, righteousness, and submission; a youth for youths, becoming an example to youths, and thus sanctifying them for the Lord."

Here, then, is direct testimony, and much more might be quoted from these writers from extreme points in the empire concerning the care which the Church of the first centuries exercised over the children.

After reading such, we are not surprised to learn that Leonidas, the martyred father of the famous Origen, who was born at Alexandria when Irenæus was writing the above-mentioned work, was accustomed to kiss the breast of his sleeping child, regarding it as the temple of the Holy Ghost.* Being a temple of the Holy Ghost and excluded from the Church, would have been in that age two ideas utterly incompatible. Another most interesting proof that Christians brought up their children in the Church, is contained in the account of the death of Justin Martyr and those who suffered with him. Justin having answered at the tribunal that he was a Christian, others who partook of the same hope were examined: "Rusticus the prefect said to Hierax: 'And you, are you a Christian?' Hierax said: 'Yes; I am a Christian, for I revere and worship the same God.' Rusticus the prefect said: 'Did Justin make you a Christian?' Hierax said: 'I was a Christian, and will be a Christian.' And Pæon stood up and

* Eusebius, Eccles. Hist., Book VI, chap. ii.

said: 'I, too, am a Christian.' Rusticus the prefect said: 'Who taught you?' Pæon said: '*From our parents we received this goodly confession.*' Euelpistus said: 'I willingly heard the words of Justin. But from my parents also I learned to be a Christian.'"

But these are not the only proofs. A certain charge made by the heathen against the Christians, and the manner in which the reply is made, is strong proof, in that it is incidental, that children were participants in the sacred ceremonies of the Church. The accusation was, that at the initiation of young novices an infant covered over with meal was placed before the candidate. Being urged on by those conducting him through the mysteries, the novice struck the covered infant, thinking it nothing but meal, till its blood ran freely, when all present greedily divided the limbs and sucked the blood of the murdered infant. By this awful crime, alleged the heathen, the Christians were pledged to each other, and covenanted to mutual silence. Minucius Felix states this charge in addition: "On a solemn day they assemble at the feast *with all their children, sisters, mothers, people of every sex and of every age;* then, after much feasting, they give way to their lust." That this feasting occurred at the same time as the killing of the infant, is proved from a comparison of the same account in Tertullian's "Apologeticus," 9, and that the charge was a base calumny on the celebration of the Lord's Supper will not be called in question by any one conversant with the account of Christian worship as given by Justin Martyr in the "First Apology," chapters lxv, lxvi, lxvii. The "Apostolical Constitu-

tions" may be also quoted in testimony. Some critics have assigned this work to the Apostolic Age, others to the end of the third century. Bunsen, who made an exhaustive analysis of the work, says: "I have proved in my analysis, more clearly than has been hitherto done, the Ante-Nicene origin of a book, or rather books, called by an early fiction 'Apostolical Constitutions,' and consequently the still higher antiquity of the materials, both ecclesiastical and literary, which they contain." That they date back to the early days, the formative period of the Church, while it was yet in the death-grapple with paganism, is admitted by all scholars who have studied the subject. But in these *Constitutions* is this exhortation to Christian parents: "Do you also baptize your infants and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of God. For says he: 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.'"

The famous Cyprian, born A. D. 200, and made bishop of Carthage 248 A. D., is an important witness as to facts occurring in his day. In his treatise "On the Lapsed," he gives an account of what he himself had witnessed. During a persecution some Christian parents were fleeing for their lives, and in their terror forgot their infant daughter. The child was delivered up by the nurse to the magistrates, who, in order to defile it, or to consecrate it in their worship, gave it in the presence of their idol some of the bread and wine that had been offered in sacrifice. After awhile, when quiet was again restored, the parents recovered their polluted infant. One day the mother, with her little one, entered the Church during the communion,

and the deacon, according to custom, gave the cup to the child, but it was unable to retain the wine on its stomach, because of the pollution of the wine drunk to the idol. However incredulous one may be concerning the cause of the child's sickness, the historical fact that children were regarded as members of the Church can not be disputed. The decision of the Council of Carthage, under the presidency of this same Cyprian, and in the name of sixty-six other bishops, concerning the baptism of infants, may also be cited, as also that of the Council of Eliberis, held about two hundred years after the apostles. At this Council it was decided that if any one left the Church, and went over to any heresy, and should again return, he should remain in a state of repentance for ten years. "But if they were infants when they were carried off, inasmuch as it was not by their own fault that they erred, they ought to be admitted without delay."*

Further the learned Bingham, in his "Antiquities of the Christian Church," shows that, in the primitive Church, children were trained from their infancy to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and cites in proof several examples mentioned by ancient historians. At what age children were trained for readers in the Church is not certain. We read of one bishop who was made reader when eight years old, of another when he was but seven, and of another, John, bishop of Chalons, who was a reader from his infancy; and also that in the Vandalic persecution in Africa, all the clergy in Carthage were murdered or banished, "*among whom were many infant readers.*"

* Concil. Elibertannum, Can. 2.

The period to which one is limited by the nature of the case prevents us from adducing other testimony, which, to unprejudiced minds, would be convincing, notwithstanding its comparatively late date. The inscriptions from the Catacombs tell much of the popular Christian belief of the early ages, and of the powerful influence of Christianity upon the social and domestic relations of those times. The limitation referred to hinders us also from dwelling upon the laws of Constantine relating to child-murder (315 A. D.), of the selling of children (321 A. D.), and of the "taking up" of exposed infants (321 A. D.); of the law of Valentinian (366 A. D.), threatening severe punishments for the crime of exposure; of the acts of the Council of Nicea (325 A. D.), and of Vaison (442 A. D.), and especially of the humane laws of Justinian. Enough has been shown in proof that to the Church of Christ is owing the deliverance of childhood from the bondage of corruption; that it not only impressed the idea of the sacredness of childhood upon the nations of that early age, but, in accordance with the teachings of the Divine Founder, regarded the offspring of believers as entitled to membership in the kingdom of heaven. What was antecedently probable, we find to have become an historical fact. What the theological grounds are for imitating the primitive Church, and what the practice of the Apostolic Church was, may now be carefully considered.

CHAPTER III.

CHILDREN UNDER ADAM.

THE position which children occupy in the Christian system as interpreted in modern evangelical theology is, strange as it may seem after a study of the early Church, a matter yet of grim perplexity in some Protestant denominations. Eighteen centuries of Christian teaching has done but little toward a scientific solution of the important question of childhood and the Church. It is still in great measure the unexplored remainder in theology. From the fact that this problem is intimately related to the central doctrine of the atonement; to the teaching office of the Church; to the responsibilities of parentage; to the continuity of Christian belief, and the symmetrical growth of the Church, one would suppose that the position which children hold relative to the Church and the scheme of redemption would be characterized in standard theological works by fullness of exposition, clearness of statement, and definiteness of result. Such is not the case. It would seem that the fashion now obtaining in some quarters of making indefiniteness the evidence of scholarship and profound knowledge had reached its climax in the treatment of this subject. No theme of importance to evangelicism has been so meagerly investigated, and consequently very few have been so barren of satisfactory results. An-

thropology has held sway long enough in theological systems; it is now high time that pædeology should become the subject of earnest Christian thought from the stand-point of the Atonement.

As the question now stands, chaos reigns in Protestant thought. The Anglican communion is charged with unevangelical views of infant regeneration and membership in the Church; and other Churches accuse each other in similar terms. What are truly evangelical views has not yet been settled. Each denomination considers itself strictly evangelical. The Presbyterian Church supposed to be hampered by the worn-out Calvinism of the Westminster Assembly, which it can not repudiate and is unable to preach, can not solve the contradiction between a universal atonement and a limited election. The Baptist denomination, entangled in the same endless meshes of decrees, foreordinations, and elections, ignores any supposition of relationship between children and the Church, placing them on the same footing with the children of heathenism, till she is morally certain they can think and act for themselves; a position plainly at war with the instincts of humanity and the genius of Christianity.* Nor among those Churches

* "How, then, is a child to be religiously educated? Religion is, first of all, a thing to be lived, and not till afterwards a matter to be instructed in. Religion must first approach a child in the form of life, and afterwards in the form of instruction. . . . We can not begin too early with prayer. When the child can not pray himself, let his mother pray with and for him. . . . The way of education is by practice to understanding, and not by understanding to practice." (The Moral Truths of Christianity, 147 ff., Luthardt.)

professedly Arminian is there either clearness or consistency of belief. Reasoning from the premise of native depravity in child nature without native demerit and to the necessity for, and application of, the atonement to children with its consequent effects, the theologians of this school are consistent neither with themselves nor with the system they attempt to expound.

"We must confess," says an eminent Arminian theologian in a recent work, "that the usual Arminian treatment of this subject is not very satisfactory. It often hesitates, vacillates. There is a native guilt, but not guilt as of actual sin. There is a native demerit and damnableness, and there is not—especially not such as might, consistently with the divine justice, be visited with judicial wrath. The indecision is from an attempt to hold Calvinism and Arminianism together beyond the point of real divergence, or from a failure to give scientific completeness to the latter."

There results, therefore, confusion and uncertainty, and the strongest argument usually put forth in affirmation of the salvation of one-half of the human race who die in infancy is, that if infants are not capable of a voluntary acceptance of the benefits of the atonement, neither are they capable of rejecting them. Such an argument, it will be seen, can be productive of no conclusion, since both members offset each other and are therefore mutually destructive. The ground thought is not, whether children can accept or reject the "free gift," but whether there is any gift for them to accept or reject, and when this

gift becomes a real thing to them, and what are its effects upon the child-nature. In order to reach satisfactory ground for Christian belief in the salvation of children dying in infancy, some fundamental principle as true in its application to adults as to them, and grounded in the Word of God, must be first obtained. From such a principle or primal truth, if it is the true one, the position which children should hold in the Christian scheme of redemption, and the relation they should bear to the Church, will be naturally developed.

Such a principle is this, that *the relation which children sustain to the Church must be determined by the relation which they sustain to Christ, and Christ sustains to them.* This, we think, is the correct principle, for Christ is the head of the Church; and this, whether we speak of a visible or invisible body; since the visible head of any Christian society can consider himself, no matter how high his pretensions may carry him, as only the vicegerent of Christ on earth. The relationship of children to the Church universal can not depend upon any recognition given them in theological systems, nor upon decrees of Councils, decisions of State Churches, or of particular denominations. The principle of their relation must be back of all these, as any other matter of Christian belief and practice.

The Church of Christ, or the visible kingdom of God on earth, is not limited to any one particular manifestation or outward expression of that kingdom, but embraces all who stand in vital relationship to Christ and maintain the preaching of the

word and proper administration of the sacraments.* In the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, any society may legislate within limits on the composition of its own membership, being answerable therefor to Almighty God and the judgment of Christendom, but it can not make laws for the universal Church. It may usurp authority over other Churches, and arrogate to itself certain exclusive powers, and in defense plead ancient custom; but it is only one of the many tribes of Israel, and as to the plea of antiquity, it would be well to remember the words of Cyprian, that

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* "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." (XIII Art. of Relig., Methodist Episcopal Church.) "The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the gospel—not confined to one nation as before, under the law—consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children; and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation." (Westminster Confession, xxv, 2. See also the Belgic Confession, 27, 29. Helvet. Conf.; Scot. Conf., Art. XVI; the Articles of Schmalcald, Art. XII; the Saxon Conf., drawn up by Melanchthon, A. D. 1551.) It must not be overlooked that in the Articles of the Methodist Episcopal Church and in those of the Anglican Church the word "faithful" does not bear the same meaning as its Latin form in the formularies of the Roman Church. There it may—and is so interpreted—mean any one who may make outward profession of belief in the teachings of the Church. Among Protestants it can only mean, simply those who are spiritually united with Christ. For early patristic definitions of the Church, see Clemens Romanus, Epis. 1, 59; Ignatius, Ep. ad; Trall., VIII; Ad Smyrn., III; Irenæus Hær., III, 6; see also Tertullian, De Prescript Hær., XX, at the close of the chapter, etc.

custom without truth is the antiquity of error—"*nam consuetudo sine veritate vestutas erroris est.*"

The principle we have laid down relative to the Church membership of children is as applicable to adults as to them; that is to say, the condition of adult membership in the Church depends upon the relation which the individual bears to Christ. Some writers maintain that it depends upon a confession of faith. But to say that membership in the Church is primarily conditioned upon a profession of faith in Christ, unless the profession is in fact but an outward expression of inward spiritual union with Christ, is simply to say that the condition of Church membership is the repetition of a form of words. If the confession is an affirmation of real faith, then it is evident that union with Christ is the true and primary condition. Other writers assert that this relation of adult believers to the Church depends upon baptism. But this view is also manifestly erroneous, since the believer is not baptized because he believes—for that sacrament is not a sign nor a seal of faith—but because he is justified and has received regenerating grace, of which baptism is the seal. Hence it follows, if a saving relationship to Christ in adults is the condition of holy baptism, and so of admission into the universal Church, then it is identical with the principle laid down relative to children. What applies to the one applies equally to the other. It is grounded in the Word of God, and appeals confidently to the Christian consciousness.

Now that this principle, or law, will be objected to by those who teach that relation to the Church rests upon what, in their phraseology, is termed "be-

lievers' baptism," which is as intelligible as if one should speak of "believers' salvation," is not to be wondered at, since it removes at a single stroke every prop which formerly buttressed their position. Child-membership has been attacked on the ground that it was supported only by custom derived from the pre-Reformation Church, the decrees of this or that Council or Synod, and a weak array of inferential arguments from Scripture. But *this* principle discards all these. It goes down through all arbitrary opinions and narrow or dubious interpretations of Scripture, and similar conceptions of apostolic methods in the Church during its formative period, and reaches a fundamental reason for the admission of children into the Church, which reason is not based upon debatable opinions of Ante-Nicene fathers, nor upon the silence of Scripture, but upon the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now that a saving relationship to Christ contains in itself a demand for recognition which the Church has no authority to reject, but is bound to accept, and that children sustain such a relation to the world's Redeemer, is the subject upon which we now enter.

What, then, is the moral status of children in the Christian system? Omitting the Pelagian and similar theories—such as that infants are born in a perfectly holy state, or that they are born with a negative character, indifferent to either good or evil—rejecting such views as being too clearly refuted by the express word of inspiration and the moral history of the race, three principal theories are presented for investigation.

1. That all children are born sinful, guilty, and totally depraved; that some, dying in infancy, are saved through the atonement of Christ, they having been elected to eternal life, according to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God.

2. That all children are born in a guilty and totally depraved state, but, through the atoning merits of Christ, all dying in infancy are saved.

3. That all children are by nature born in a state of depravity, but, through the atonement, are in that moral state which, in the adult believer, corresponds to justification, and so, dying in infancy, are infallibly saved.

These theories are opposed to each other by essential differences, although in some points they all agree. The first and second agree in the sinfulness and guiltiness and depravity (in which last the third also agrees, with modifications) of the child-nature. They disagree on the salvation of all dying in infancy. The third theory—for so we will term it—differs from both on the sinfulness and guilt of child-nature. With the second it denies that only some, dying in infancy, are saved, and asserts, for the want of a better term, the justification of all children coming into the world. The first theory is Calvinistic, and is sustained by the confessional standards and theological writings of Calvinistic Churches, though a commendable effort has been made to eliminate such teachings from the doctrinal expositions of the Presbyterian Church. Since it is in accord with the second theory on the sinfulness of child-nature, these two theories may be considered together. For our purpose it is not neces-

sary that they should be studied at all; for in full view of the fact that an atonement has been made, the result is the same, whether infants are guilty or not. If guilty, the atonement of Christ obliterates the guilt; if not guilty, through the same atonement they are brought out of the alienation to the holiness of God in which they had been through the Adamic sin, and are recognized, declared, and accepted as the purchase of the precious blood. But it is important that the salvation of children should be at least briefly set forth, and this requires some treatment of the question of sinfulness and guilt.

In agreement with, and as a basis for the first theory, the Westminster Confession teaches: "Elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when and where and how he pleaseth." The dogma of infant damnation is plainly taught; for if only elect infants are saved when dying, those not elected are surely lost. That this was the doctrine taught by those who framed the Confession, and the doctrine they intended to be understood as teaching, is a matter of irrefutable history.*

1. *But who are elect infants?* The importance of this question lies in the obvious fact that if there is an election of infants, there is a difference among infants (children), as a class, of moral character, and

* "The Westminster Doctrine of the Salvation of Infants," by Dr. Charles A. Briggs, in *Presbyterian Review*, April, 1887. The efforts to expunge or change the doctrine referred to by Calvinistic theologians of the present day are very humane; but such efforts are in direct antagonism to the accepted theology of the Church. The change is a revolution, and should be so recognized.

therefore a corresponding difference in the relation which they sustain to Christ and he sustains to them. But vital as this question is, no satisfactory answer can be given to it. It can not be affirmed that children of believers are elect; for on true Calvinistic principles no one can be proved to be efficiently called and elected. The eighteenth chapter of the Westminster Confession does unmistakably teach that "such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus and love him in sincerity, endeavoring to walk in all good conscience before him, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed," and the second section gives the ground for this assurance. But in section third of the same chapter is this: "This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith but that a true believer may wait long and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it," and the explanation of this section is summed up in the American "Exposition" of the Confession in the words: "This assurance is not the attainment of all believers."* From this fact it is evident that no affirmation can be made by that portion of Christ's Church that this or that child of this or that believer was saved, since the true believer is known to God alone.

2. But let it be granted that an elect parent may be known, and that, through the covenant, the child of such a parent may be entitled to the sacrament of

* An Exposition of the Confession of Faith, etc., by the Rev. Robert Shaw; revised by the Committee of Publication. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication.

baptism; does it, because of such parentage, belong to the elect? Such a conclusion would ground election in parental descent, and not upon the secret council of God; it is the argument of those who say, "We have Abraham to our father" (Matt. iii, 9), and is logically destructive of Gospel principles. For let it be granted, as the Westminster Assembly declared, that "the seed and posterity of the faithful, born within the Church, have by their birth interest in the covenant and right to the seal of it," does it follow that this seed is regenerated because of this connection, and that therefore the children of the unbelievers are unregenerate? This can not be. Whatever is the moral nature of believers' children as such, that is the nature of all children. "God is no respecter of persons," and the grace of God is not through flesh and blood; for "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John iii, 6.) Hereditary grace is not only unknown to the Word of inspiration, but the very supposition of it is antagonistic to the whole body of apostolic teaching. They only are the sons of God "who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i, 13.) Now, since it is Divine grace alone that differentiates the moral character of the two classes of children, and since God is in truth no respecter of persons, and since this grace is not hereditary in the children of believers, it necessarily follows, unless God has decreed that some infants shall be damned, that all children are upon the same moral basis, and all bear an equal—that is, an identical—relationship to the world's Redeemer. That

God has decreed from all eternity that a certain number of infants shall be saved and the remainder lost, is too horrible to be thought of, and the day has forever gone by when a dogma felt to be contrary to the common sense of mankind can command either the assent of the intellect or the devotion of the heart.

The constant protest and unanswerable argument against Calvinistic dogmas of foreordination, unconditioned election, and reprobation; an argument which rejects the elaborate theories and profound subtilties of scholastic dialectics, an argument which is as universal as the race and as enduring as humanity,— is the inborn sense of individual responsibility, THE OUGHT and THE OUGHT NOT in every human heart. What ought to be done, can be done; and what ought not to be done, need not be done. And so, in every soul there is the inborn consciousness of individual responsibility, and therefore of individual freedom, either to do or not to do, untrammeled by the effects of eternal decrees. No less powerful in its authority or divine in its origin is that inborn instinct which, whatever may be the logical demands from premises of our own making, still persists with unceasing and unconquerable force against those dogmas, however much supported they may be by philosophy or buttressed with Scriptural phrases, which condemn any helpless babe on the bosom to the pains of an eternal hell. Between children there is primarily no moral distinction; what is the nature of one is the nature of all. The difference between the children of believers and those of unbelievers is external and not internal. It relates

wholly to the conditions in which they are placed, which conditions bring them under the spiritualizing influences of Christian teaching and worship and holy example, or deprive them of the same. This difference is one of degrees, even among the children of believers. In one family there may be the strictest regard for everything conducive to the nature and rich growth of piety in the hearts of its members; while in another family, even of the same Church, the chilling influences of the world, a cold, hesitating attitude towards God and the Church, may injure the tender bud of religion in the heart of the child, and render sickly and precarious the orderly and spontaneous development of those Christian graces which, while beautiful at all times in older people, seem angelic when set in the beauty of childhood. The text in 1 Cor. vii, 12, 14, is not opposed by this view. From the nature of the case, the Apostle there only declares that the children of believers are, through the faith of their parents, ceremonially clean and entitled to all the privileges of the Church. Were their parents unbelievers, they as children could have no part in the visible Church, whatever may be their relation to the universal atonement of Christ, since the external blessings of the covenant are only to those who are parties to that covenant, for "the promise is to you and to your children" (Acts ii, 39); to you as believers accepting the promise. The child can not make a covenant; the parents will not; therefore the child, like the parents, is ceremonially unclean.

3. It can not be maintained that reception of baptism by believers' children effects a moral differ-

ence between them and the children of unbelievers. To affirm that it does, is to assert baptismal regeneration; for it makes the moral change inseparable from the physical act of baptism. That children are regenerated in holy baptism, in the Augustinian sense, is nothing to the point. Augustine did not mean by regeneration, as is very well known, a moral change, but a change of ecclesiastical relation only; and held that children, after baptism, must experience that moral change which they had not previously experienced. (Contra Julian, Bk. V, c. 16; Bk. VI, c. 6; contra Pelag. *et al.*; De Peccat. Orig. Bk. II, c. 40.) To affirm baptismal regeneration in a spiritual sense is, notwithstanding the teaching of some early fathers of the Ante-Nicene period, directly contrary to the inspired Word; for "he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly: neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. ii, 28, 29.) And although it has been stoutly maintained by the Tractarian party in the Church of England,* and their imitators in the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, it has never had any influence upon the doctrine of regeneration as held by evangelical Churches, and is no

* Many explicit statements against baptismal regeneration may be gathered from the works of the most eminent divines of the Church of England; such as Latimer, Cranmer, Ridley, and the great Hooker, the Bishops Jewell, Hall, Ussher, Davenant, Reynolds, Leighton, Hopkins, Burnet, Tillotson, Beveredge, and many others.

longer considered a debatable question in Protestant theology.

The conclusion, then, is that the difference between children of believers and those of unbelievers is not internal, but external; not moral, but accidental; and, as far as their outward condition is concerned, may be changed at any time by the acceptance of the parent of the covenant of life as offered in Christ Jesus.

II. *What proof is there that elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated?* This doctrine is not peculiar to Calvinistic Churches, but is found in the theology of Arminian Churches also, and is therefore of much interest. From the Calvinistic side it is grounded in the doctrine of election and reprobation. The Arminian assumes it to be so without any Scriptural proof, direct or inferential. These two views may be included under one head; but, the ground for both being different, our remarks are now confined to the statement of the Westminster Confession. According to Calvinism, infants are corrupt and guilty in the sight of God, and therefore can not, in such a condition, enter the state of eternal blessedness. But elect infants must enter there if they die, else they would not be elect; consequently, they must be changed in their moral nature—that is, regenerated as they pass out through the portals of death. One great and important fact should be carefully observed in this doctrinal statement of the Westminster Assembly—a fact which Arminianism also strongly teaches—that is, *infant regeneration.* How much may be included in the term regeneration, as applied to infants, it is not necessary now to examine; it is more to the

purpose to notice *when* this regeneration takes place. According to the Confession, it is in the hour of death, and in this some Arminian writers agree. But is it not a little remarkable how such accurate knowledge of the time when an infant is regenerated can be obtained in the absence of a single passage of Scripture from which even a doubtful conclusion may be drawn? If there is a passage of Holy Writ in favor of this notion, why is it not produced? There is none. Death is nowhere regarded in Holy Scripture as a condition of salvation, nor is there any ground, Scriptural or rational, for making a difference between the moral character of the children of believers, dying in infancy, and those *not* dying in infancy. The dying infant has no more capacity for regenerating grace, no deeper insight into the mysteries of redemption, no profounder consciousness of inbred sin and need of an Almighty Deliverer than a living infant. The saving power of Christ's atonement is as morally necessary to the living child as to the dead child; for God can not look with complacency upon a sinful soul, whether it is in the body or out of the body. To confine the saving influence of the Holy Spirit, in the case of infants, to the time of death, is an avoidance of the obvious truth that all infants, whether in a dying state or not, are, through the Atonement, in that state of salvation, however named, which corresponds to acceptance in the adult believer. The moral character of the soul does not depend upon terms; for, although the Holy Spirit, we may grant, has appropriated certain terms expressing certain moral states, yet all those terms are taken from the vocabularies of men, and can not be consid-

ered as being the exact, complete, precise, and only possible verbal mediums of Divine thought, of every spiritual idea in the mind of God. Some languages are more religious than others—that is, they have greater capacity for conveying spiritual ideas—but the most perfect language must fall far short of being a perfect medium of Divine revelation, and possibly no term can fully express the whole of the thought it is used to express. Justification may be one of such terms, regeneration another; for while the latter may express the idea of a new birth as a complete fact, yet it may embrace the whole process of BECOMING, from the first moment of quivering life up to the time of separate existence, when, as a completed fact, the living thing stands out distinct from all else.* We are not now attempting a definition of regeneration, nor a widening nor a changing of terms which have a distinct, fixed, historical meaning, but only to suggest a fact independent of technical phrases.

To return. Death is simply a physical act, a cessation of all vital functions, and, as such, can have no influence upon the character of the departing spirit. But if it is said that death affords an opportunity for the fullest efficiency of the Holy Ghost, in the transforming or renewal of the child-nature—a statement which need not be controverted—still it must be seen

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* Mr. Wesley's sermon on the "Scripture Way of Salvation:" "So that the salvation which is here spoken of might be intended to be the entire work of God, from the first dawning of grace in the soul till it is consummated in glory. If we take this in its utmost extent, it will include all that is wrought in the soul by what is frequently termed natural conscience, but more properly, preventing grace," etc.

that the life of the child was a continuous opportunity for at least a limited display of saving grace, or else that the life was a hindrance to, a limiting force against, the possible activity of the Spirit. Moreover, if the child was not in a saved state until the moment of death, its moral character previous to that crisis—that is, from the cradle to the grave—was obnoxious to Almighty God, the infinitely benevolent Father. How such a view can be in harmony with the redemptive work of Christ, of whom it was prophesied, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young;" or how it can agree in letter or in spirit with the express teachings of Him who came to fulfill that prophecy, saying, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven;" who took them up in his arms, "put his hands upon them, and blessed them;" who identified himself with them in saying, "Whosoever receiveth one of these little ones in my name, receiveth me,"—how such a doctrine can harmonize with such teachings, may be safely left for its solution to the leisure of a philosophic hour, or more safely still to the enlightening influence of the Spirit of God upon the Christian consciousness.

III. The basis for the dogma of hereditary guilt is laid in the assumption that, in a realistic sense, Adam was the head of the human race, and that therefore his acts were the acts of the race, and his sin the sin of all his posterity. This doctrine was first introduced into Christian theology by the immortal Augus-

tine, the Bishop of Hippo, in the fifth century. In his great work, "The City of God," he puts forth his views in this manner: "God, the author of nature, but not of sin, created man upright; but he, having through his own will become depraved and condemned, propagated depraved and condemned offspring. For we were all in that one man, since we *were* all that one man—omnes enim fuimus in illo, quando fuimus ille unus—who lapsed into sin through that woman who was made from him previous to transgression. 'All men at that time sinned in Adam, since in his nature all men were as yet that one man.' 'Adam was the one in whom all sinned.'"* Concerning infants he taught: "The infant who is lost is punished because he belongs to the mass of perdition, and as a child of Adam is justly condemned on the ground of the ancient obligation." †

In his Epistle to Jerome he asks: "How can so many thousands of souls, which leave the bodies of unbaptized infants be with any equity condemned, if they were newly created and introduced into these bodies, for no previous sin of their own, but by the mere will of Him who created them to animate these

* See the various treatises; De Peccat. Meretis III, vii, 14; De Concept. et Grat. x; De Peccat. Orig., 36, 38; De Nupt., et Concept., II, c. 5. See Noack, Dogmengeschichte s. 104. Meier, Dogmen. 123; Baumgarten Crusius Lehrbuch der Chr Dogmen, Vol. I, 320; F. C. Baur, Dogmengeschichte, 178, sec. 46; Ruperti Lehr-Buch Dogmen, 191–198; Beck, Christliche Dogmen, 224; Augusti, Dogmen, 331; Hagenbach, Hist. Doct, 3 vols., copious references. See also The Christian Doctrine of Sin, Julius Müller. He treats the doctrine of Original Sin with profound penetration.

† De Concept. et Grat., c. 9. Opera, Vol. VII, 475.

bodies, and foreknew that each of them, for no fault of his own, would die unbaptized?" That some infants were saved and the remainder lost, was the logical consequence which Augustine was compelled to accept from the first premises of his system. All being guilty, God could without injustice select from the whole guilty mass those whom he chose; and those thus chosen are the elect, those not chosen the reprobate. Calvin developed these views of Augustine, and in the Reformation period they passed over into English theology, and, through the Westminster Confession, may have been conveyed to our day. In the famous Institutes, Calvin taught, concerning the moral condition of infants, that "they bring their condemnation with them from their mother's womb, being liable to punishment, not for the sin of another, but for their own. For although they have not as yet produced the fruits of their iniquity, yet they have the seed inclosed in themselves; nay, their whole nature is, as it were, a seed of sin; therefore they can not but be odious and abominable to God. Whence it follows that it is properly considered sin before God, because there could not be liability to punishment without sin." The Roman Catholic Church in the Council of Trent formally adopted the same doctrine of infant guilt: "Whosoever shall affirm that new-born infants, even though springing from baptized parents, ought not to be baptized; or shall say that though they are baptized for the remission of sins, yet they derive not from Adam that original guilt (*originalis peccati*), which must be expiated in the laver of regeneration, in order to ob-

tain eternal life, . . . let him be anathema. Whosoever shall deny that the guilt of original sin is remitted (rectum originalis peccati remitti negat) by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ bestowed in baptism, . . . let him be anathema." The same doctrine was adopted by all the great Confessions set forth in that stormy period of reconstruction; such as the Confession of Belgium, of Helvetia, of Bohemia, the French Confession, the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and even by the Arminians in Holland. Arminius, the great opposer of the entire Augustinian, and, as founded thereon, Calvinistic scheme of redemption asserted: "Infants have rejected the grace of the gospel in their parents' forefathers, by which act they deserved to be deserted by God. For I would like to have proof adduced how all posterity could sin in Adam against law, and yet infants, to whom the gospel is offered in their parents and rejected, have not sinned against the grace of the gospel." The various Calvinistic bodies in this country practically reach identical conclusions by different routes, each explaining the conclusion according to its method of approach.

Augustine's theory was based upon a false exegesis, and his followers have buttressed it with a false philosophy. The Scripture upon which the great theologian relied was, Rom. v, 12: ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον—*from the fact*, or, *because that all have sinned.* In the Latin Version which Augustine used, the text is translated: "In quo omnes peccaverunt"—*In whom all have sinned*—and it was supposed that the ἐφ' ᾧ—*in quo, in whom*—could refer to no one but Adam.

This was the stronghold of Augustinianism, though other passages were employed, and upon this the theory that the race really sinned in Adam was established. The philosophy with which Augustine supported his interpretation, whether consciously or not, and which the Schoolmen employed in the development of the same doctrine was the Aristotelian doctrine of realism. That form of it which affirms universals to be prior to particulars, applied to anthropology in theology, means that Adam was the universal man, the *genus homo*, and that all individuals since derived from him were *in* him. This being true, when Adam sinned, they sinned, and when he was condemned, they were condemned; and thus each individual is born under condemnation, which is not renewed except by the waters of baptism.*

It need hardly be stated that, when Augustine announced the doctrines of election and reprobation and of original guilt, they were regarded as novelties. For four hundred years the Church had been exercising her authority as the teacher of the nations without even suspecting that her understanding of the sacred Scriptures concerning sin and redemption was fundamentally wrong. The theologians of the East, many of them bishops over the Churches founded by the apostles, are found holding views irreconcilable with those of Augustine. Among these early writers, maintaining, it is true, various notions among themselves, but none of them advo-

* See Hagenbach, Hist. of Doct., Vol. I, p. 425, Edinburgh Ed., for the various causes which probably influenced Augustine in the formation of his theory.

cating what was afterwards known as Augustinianism, are Lactantius, and Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Jerusalem, Cyril of Alexandria, Athanasius, Ephraem Syrus, Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Theodoret. Cyril of Jerusalem, says, respecting original sin: "When we come into the world we are sinless, but now we sin from choice;" "We did not sin before our souls came into the world, but coming into it free from evil, we transgress by the choice of our mind." The sentence of death threatened against Adam extended to him and all his posterity, even unto those who had not sinned as Adam did when he disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit. Gregory Nyssa recognized the fact of universal sinfulness, but in respect to infants, denied that the tendency to sin was guilt. The eloquent Chrysostom also denied the guilt of original tendency to evil, and asserted that "it is not unbefitting that from that man who sinned, and thereby became mortal, there should be generated those who should also sin, and thereby become mortal; but that by that single act of disobedience another being is made a *sinner;* what reason is there in this? No one owes anything to father until he becomes a sinner for himself. What, then, is the meaning of the word ἁμαρτολοὶ in the phrase 'were made' sinners? It seems to me to denote liability to suffering and death."* In the Latin Church Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, and Hilary stand out, the two last in the age immediately preceding Augustine, as representative of

*Shedd, Hist. Christ. Doct., Vol. I, 27–50.

the early theology of the West. In his treatise *De Anima,* Tertullian speaks of original sin in terms similar to the Greek theologians, and distinctly teaches that in the soul of man some good still lingers, though "weighted down by the evil." In his celebrated tract on Baptism he pleads for a delay in the baptism of infants. because being comparatively innocent, they have no need to hasten reception of that sacrament which signifies the remission of sins. "Why does the innocent period of life hasten to the remission of sins?" "Cyprian denied the guilt of original sin, though, like Tertullian, he affirmed the necessity of baptism the grace of which is needed to remit the sin derived from the parent." In his Epistle to Fidus, on the baptism of infants, he says: "But if anything could hinder men from obtaining grace, their more heinous sins might rather hinder those who are mature and grown up and older. But again, if even to the greatest sinners, and to those who had sinned much against God, when they subsequently believed, remission of sins is granted—and nobody is hindered from baptism and from grace—how much rather ought we to shrink from hindering an infant, who being lately born, has not sinned except in that, being born after the flesh according to Adam, he has contracted the contagion of the ancient death at its earliest birth, who approaches the more easily on this very account to the reception of the forgiveness of sins, that to him are remitted—not his own sins, but the sins of another." That this was the general belief of the African Church at the time, is seen in the fact that this epistle is written in

the name of sixty-six colleagues of Cyprian in the government of the Church, who were present in council when this decision was made. Not until a century later in the writings of Ambrose and Hilary do we find in the Latin Church any well-marked tendency toward the anthropology which Augustine finally developed. With respect to his doctrines of election and reprobation, upon which the doctrine of infant damnation was grounded, and upon which doctrines Calvin also, as he was bound, founded the same tenet, it is well known that they were also regarded as entire novelties. When Augustine sent forth his treatise on "Correction and Grace," in which he unfolded his views on Predestination, many Christians living in Marseilles warmly opposed such views, and remonstrated with him, through Prosper of Aquitane and Hilary of Arles, on the ground of their unscriptural character and being contrary to the conscience of the Church. In a letter addressed to Augustine, these Christians say: "We heartily approve of your general confutation of Pelagius and his followers. But why do you superfluously mingle with it a system of novel peculiarities, which we can not receive? To say nothing of what we at least deem the utter inconsistency of the system with Scripture, it is in truth, quite new to us; we never even so much as heard of it before; we find it unsanctioned by any one of the preaching fathers, and we perceive it to be contrary to the sense of the whole Catholic Church.*

*Faber, Primitive Doctrine of Election. (Augustine's Works, Vol. VII.)

For four hundred years, then, the Church had been teaching an anthropology at variance in many points with Augustine's doctrines, and during this long period was wholly ignorant of this doctrine of unconditioned election and reprobation. But one Council after another, having condemned Pelagianism, approved Augustinianism; the Schoolmen supported it with the Aristotelian philosophy, and carried it on to the age of the Reformation, when it embedded itself in the various Reformed Confessions and was wrought out into scientific form by the powerful intellect of Calvin. But the human mind could not rest satisfied with such a dogma, and reaction soon set in, and various other methods of solving the question of sin and guilt were resorted to by the new schools which sprang up as results of the unappeasable conviction that the anthropology of Augustine, and his doctrines of predestination and grace, whether as set forth by that father or by Calvin, were radically wrong and dishonoring to God's character in the thought of men who could not reconcile the scheme with any principle of honor or justice.

Calvinism in this country is divided into several schools, each regarding the other as offering no satisfactory solution of the awful fact of the original sinfulness and guilt of human nature being compatible with the justice and goodness of God. The Old School Presbyterians taught that men are sinful at the very beginning of their existence, and obnoxious to the wrath of God because the sin of Adam is imputed to them. Thus Dr. Hodge, in his Commentary on Romans, where he sets forth the imputation theory

in the clearest and straightest manner, says: "The great fact in the apostle's mind was, that God regards and treats all men from the first moment of their existence as out of fellowship with himself, as having forfeited his favor. . . . The covenant being formed with Adam, not only for himself, but also for his posterity—in other words, Adam having been placed on trial—his act was, in virtue of this relation, *regarded as our act.*" When the correctness of the interpretation is questioned, the justice is placed in the fact that God has so ordered it in the constitution which he has established. According to this, a man may be justly condemned forever, whether he was sinful or not; and to say that God imputes sin where there is no sin is absurd, and reflects greatly on the Divine justice and holiness. God sees things as they are. If one is sinful, God sees him as sinful. If he is not sinful, God is just and loving, and will not regard him nor treat him as being what he is not. And how, then, can God regard that act of Adam as our individual act when it was *not* our act? The whole theory is a baseless assumption. It violates every sense of justice, and can not be true. There are other theories adopted by eminent divines in the various Calvinistic schools of thought; but we think the two indicated to be sufficient for ascertaining the general drift of a system of belief which can not be defended nor preached, and which is fast passing away from the thought and interest of the theological world.

In opposition to the views which have thus been briefly outlined, whether regarded as Augustinianism or Calvinism, whether taught by Old School or New

School, is Wesleyan-Arminianism, which stands for the true freedom of the will, the universality of the atonement, the salvation of all children, and affirms Divine election to be based upon conduct.

Adam was the head of the race in the sense that the father is the head of the family. In no real sense were we in Adam or acted with him. We were in him in the same sense and in no other sense than the future child is in the present possible father, or a future generation is in the present generation, or as all lions now existing may be said to have been in the first lion. When the first lion lived, all lions lived; because, if no prohibitory or destroying law or power intervenes, they will, in accordance with the design for which the first lion was created, live and act according to the laws of that lion-nature which they have derived from their progenitor. It may also be said that when the first lion died, all lions died, though as yet they had no existence, because the same nature which succumbed in the first lion to the laws of decay, is the nature of every lion descended from that lion, and it is impossible to escape from that decay unless the lion could escape from the lion-nature which it has received.

In no other way was the human race in Adam. There was no real and personal existence of the individual in him, and therefore there could have been no real, personal acting of the individual, nor participation of the same in the sin of Adam. His sin was personal. For it he was personally responsible. He was guilty, and neither the sin, nor the guilt of it as such, could be imputed to any one else. Neverthe-

less, the *consequences* of it might spread out beyond him, providing that the conditions for the actual effect of the consequences are permitted to exist; that is to say, the effect of Adam's sin will come upon Adam's posterity, should he have posterity. In this, so far, there is no mystery. If it be said that there is a mystery in the fact that the benevolent God should allow the consequences to come upon innocent posterity, we confess that in the light of revelation we can see nothing mysterious or bewildering in it. How could it be otherwise if posterity of Adam is to exist? God—let us speak reverently—can do one of two things; either prevent the possibility of a posterity, or let the posterity come, and provide a Redeemer who shall deliver that posterity from all consequences of Adam's sin. He has chosen, in his infinite wisdom, to permit man to be; and therefore, in his infinite justice and love, he has chosen to redeem him.

Adam, of his own free will, fell from the holiness of whatever kind it was in which God had created him. The result of this fall was a withdrawal from him of that original holiness. He was then without holiness; he was unholy, he was depraved. This state of deprivation is the negative side of the result of his fall. But deprived of the principle of holiness which had formerly held dominion over him, the merely animal or carnal disposition becomes the ruling principle or governing element in the soul, and the deprivation becomes depravation. The Will is held in bondage to the governing disposition, and instead of delight in the will of God, it has its delight in the flesh. In such a condition, *abstracted from all coun-*

teracting influences of the Holy Spirit through the Atonement, there is no possible turning back to true holiness. The soul is darkened by the withdrawal of the light—its holiness which it lost—and is sunk into the anti-spiritual state of animalism and carnality; is sold under sin, and is therefore, from the state of its nature, necessarily at enmity with the spiritual law of God; is opposed to his holiness, as darkness is to light, and can not please God. The good has departed or become a negation. Evil takes its place; and, since evil can not change its own nature and become good, the human nature in which this evil is and rules, and of which it has become an element, can not of itself return to holiness and God. Hence, the article of the Church: "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he can not turn and prepare himself by *his own natural strength and works* to faith and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, *without the grace* of God through Christ preventing us, and working with us when we have that good will."

By this it must not be understood that the Will is completely destroyed; for an unfree Will is no Will, alternativeness being an essential quality or attribute in any true concept of the Will. Nor that the spirit of man is totally depraved in the sense that the idea of, and certain involuntary impulses towards, the good, are totally eradicated from the soil of human nature by the unrestrained riot of evil forces; for such an essentially diabolical nature as it would then be, would be devoid of the possibility of salvation;

that is to say, *capacity* would be lacking; and a granite mountain, or a beast, or the Satan whom we conceive to be the impersonation of the evil of the universe, could as easily become the subject of redemption as such a totally depraved nature. Redemption is possible only when there is responsiveness to the means of redemption. Where there is no ability to respond to, no capacity for appropriating, no receptivity to holy impressions and influences, there is no moral nature, which is the only sphere for the activities of redeeming grace. Though man fell, he did not cease to be a moral being. He still possessed the power of choice, and, though by this power alone he could not restore himself, he still possessed the capacity for restoration. As that profound theologian, Martensen, says: "It was not the *receptivity*, but the *productivity*, that was wanting to fallen men."* Man still possessed free Will, either to do or not to do, metaphysically considered; but the

* "When the Church in her theology describes inborn sinfulness as *totalis carentia virium spiritualium*, and includes all "spiritual energies" as energies, moral and religious, in the deepest sense as energies (*Kräfte*) of the kingdom of God, she by no means denies that spiritual gifts of nature may be manifested by sinful humanity in the sphere of this present life, or that human nature possesses a susceptibility for the revelation of love and impulses toward the kingdom of God; she only declares the total incapacity (*Untüchtigkeit*) of sinful humanity to bring forth of itself the highest good, its inability to realize the true ideal. It is not the receptivity, but the productivity, which is wanting to the natural man." (Dogm., sec. 94.) See also Nitzsch (Christlich. Lehre, 245), where he says: "There is a natural Göttlichkeit des menschlichen Geistes, without which one can not think of the loss of the Divine likeness or of unblessedness in fallen man."

ability to carry out its designs was wanting, as the Apostle says: "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which I will, I find not."

This fallen, depraved nature is inherited by all who are of the offspring of Adam. Adam was created in the image (likeness) of God. After the fall, Adam "begot a son in his *own* likeness." This depravity must be transmitted to us if we are descended from fallen Adam, since it was a quality of his nature as fallen when he begot us, and that nature can not be imparted without receiving in the inheritance what constituted that nature. Modern philosophy, independent of theological theories, emphasizes this tremendous truth. The doctrine of heredity develops the fact that each race has its own typical characteristics which distinguish it from other races. The Saxon race, for instance, has certain qualities, such as endurance, frankness, and energy, which are not found among the southern nations of Europe, as the French, the Italian, and the Spanish, who, indeed, have more polish, more finesse, more shrewdness, intenser imagination, and finer poetic insight into the beauties of form and color than the Northern peoples, but who lack those sturdy, conquering qualities which history has demonstrated to be essential requisites of dominion and power. The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, ascends the stream of history in his grand argument, and going beyond Grecian and Roman and Jew, back beyond the origin of nations to the Deluge, and still farther, beyond the Patriarchs, to the very beginning of the race, singles out the first man as the fount from whence the deadly corruption has flowed into the

nature of humanity. All are now, by the nature they inherit from him, what he made himself by his own free act.

The fact that our nature is now biased toward evil, and that continually, is a fact that no sane man can deny, no philosophy explain away. We may say with Rousseau, that there is no inborn sinfulness, that our present sin-consciousness is the product of a false culture; or with Kant, in his doctrine of radical evil, assert an inborn tendency in favor of self as against law; or with Schelling and Steffin, affirm a pre-natal act of the soul in some other realm of being; or with Schleiermacher and Hegel, hold that man is overpowered at the beginning by the blind impulse of nature—we may accept any of these views, but they are all only attempted explanations of the fact of sin, which is recognized as such as a reason for attempting to explain it. The explanation may vanish, the fact remains.

This depravity is universal. If it were not ingrained in human nature it would not be universal; and, on the other hand, if it were not universal it would be proof positive that it was not original. But wherever we look, in whatever age of the world's history we begin our investigations, sin is already there; and whatever religion man has adopted in his gropings after God, the consciousness of sin lies at the bottom. The wisest men and profoundest philosophers of antiquity, outside the circle of Judaism, were as deeply sensible of the universality of depravity as the men of the present, and of the utter inability of man to recover himself to righteousness and God.

Plato says: "The nature of mankind is greatly degenerated and depraved; all manner of disorders infest human nature, and men, being impotent, are torn in pieces by their lusts as by so many wild beasts;"* and in the Timæus he states that "the cause of the corruption is from our parents, so that we never relinquish their evil way, or escape the blemish of their evil habit." Epictetus relates his inner experience of sin when he says of one sinning, "What he wills, he does not do; what he does not will, that he does."† Ovid expresses the same thought: "If I could I would be more sane. But some unknown power forces me, against my will. Desire draws me one way, discretion another. I see and approve the better way, but follow the worse."‡ Seneca¶ and Cicero§ and Horace may be cited to the same sad fact. "Our corrupt nature," says Seneca, "has drunk in such deep draughts of iniquity, which are so far incorporated in its very bowels that you can not remove it save by

* Politicus. See also Critias; The Laws, IX.

† II, 26: Ὁ ἁμαρτάνων, ὃ μὲν θέλει, οὐ ποιεῖ, καὶ ὃ μὴ θέλει ποιεῖ.

‡ "Si possem, sanior essem.
Sed trahit invitam nova vis; aliudque cupido,
Mens aliud suadet. Video meliora, proboque:
Deteriora sequor." —Metam. VII, 18 sqq.

¶ Ep. 52. See also De Clementia, Lib. I, c. 6: "Peccavimus omnes, alii gravia, alii leviora, alii ex destinato, alii forte impulsi, aut aliena nequitia ablati; alii in bonis consiliis parum fortiter stetimus et innocentiam inviti ac renitentes perdidimus. Nec delinquimus tantum, sed usque ad extremum ævi delinquemus."

§ "Est in animis omnium fere natura molle quiddam, demissum, humile, enervatum quodammodo et languidum, senile." He then goes on to say: "Were there nothing besides this, man would be the greatest of monsters; but there is present to every man reason, which presides over and gives laws to all.'

tearing them out;" and in writing to his friend Lucilius, he asks: "What is it, Lucilius, that, when we set ourselves in one way, draws us another; and, when we desire to avoid any course, drives us into it? What is it that so wrestles with our mind, allowing us never to settle any good resolution once for all?" In the same view Cicero says: "The seed of virtues are natural to our constitutions, and, were they suffered to come to maturity, would naturally conduct us to a happy life; but now, as soon as we are born and received into the world, we are instantly familiarized with all kinds of depravity and perversity of opinions, so that we may be said almost to suck in error with our nurse's milk."

In the Third Satire, Horace notes: "No one is born without vice; he is the best man who is encumbered with the least." And a little farther on, at the beginning of the second part of the same Satire, he says: "Upon the whole, forasmuch as the vice anger, *as well as others inherent in foolish* [mortals], can not be totally eradicated, why does not human reason make use of its own weights and measures, and so punish faults as the nature of the case requires?" How strongly corroborative is all this, and much more that might be cited, of St. Paul's testimony as to the natural man, in Romans vii, 15: "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; . . . for the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not do, that I do. . . . I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me." The uniformity of this consciousness of inbred sin is such that no stronger

argument for the universality of original depravation can be produced. From the universal consciousness there can be no appeal. Primary truths are not debatable. Men may wrangle over names, and over the consequences of their concessions, but the underlying fact remains. From the beginning the cry of the human is: "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not do, that I do."

This inbred depravity is termed by theologians *original sin.* This term, sin, however, in its usual signification, is inappropriate, although it has obtained wide acceptance in popular thought and theological language. It is sin; but it is sin in the *abstract,* not in the *concrete.* Sin in the *abstract* is the want of conformity of the soul to the holiness of God, or, what is the same thing, a lack of agreement to the law. St. John (First Epistle, iii, 4) defines sin as lawlessness (*ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία*), and all the terms used in Scripture denoting sin, such as חָטָא, עִוֶּה, שָׁגָה, רָע, signify disobedience to law, wandering from the straight path; and the figurative terms, פֶּשַׁע, מֶרֶד, מְשׁוּבָה, מַעַל, with their equivalents in Greek, *παράπτωμα, παραχοὴ παράβασις,* all denote a falling away from or a transgressing of the law. Sin in the *concrete* is, every act of a free being in violation of a known law. Many have regarded original depravity as really sin, because of the definition above given by the apostle John and other texts, as Matthew ix, 4; Mark vii, 21; Romans viii, 7; v, 12; John viii, 34; but John's definition is based, as the context shows, upon *the state,* the inbred result of habit, of those *acting, practicing* sin. But what is it in those who do not act? Dr. A. A. Hodge defines

original sin as "the hereditary moral corruption common to all men from birth," and affirms: "1. That original sin is purely moral, being the innate proneness of the will to evil. 2. That having its seat in the will, averse to the holy laws of God, it biases the understanding, and thus deceives the conscience, leads to erroneous moral judgments, to blindness of mind, to deficient and perverted sensibility in relation to moral objects, to the individual's action by the sensuous nature, and thus to corruption of the whole life. 3. Thus it presents two aspects: (1) The loss of the original righteous habit of will. (2) The presence of a positively unrighteous habit." (Outlines of Theology.)

The Seventh Article of the Methodist Episcopal Church defines original sin as "the corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is, of his own nature, inclined to evil, and that continually."

Dr. Raymond defines original sin as a "derangement," an "enfeeblement" of the moral powers; Dr. Whedon, as a sinwardness, a tendency or bias of the will toward evil; Dr. Knapp, as a tendency to sinful passions or unlawful propensities, which are perceived in man whenever objects of desire are placed before him, and laws are laid upon him. Is this depravation, through the deprivation of holiness, sin in any other than in a metaphysical sense?

The definition of Hodge is admirable; but the question behind his definitions which he has not considered is, whether this "proneness of the will to evil"

is in itself truly sin, and therefore punishable, *before* it has "biased the understanding," *before* it has "deceived the conscience," *before* it has "blinded the mind," or done any of those other things mentioned; whether, as a *tendency*, it is, in and of itself, sufficient to damn to all eternity? The tendency to sin is not sin itself; for the tendency can be separated from the sin. If it is sin, it is so in a metaphysical sense, and justice requires that its punishment, if such there can be in such a case, should also be metaphysical; and that if it is imputed, its imputation should be metaphysical.

But for this depravity, this sin, the child born of Adam is not guilty; that is, liable to punishment. The fundamental notion of guilt is, amenability to law; and this involves the notion of *violation* of law, without which there can be no amenability. The infant has violated no law, and is therefore not guilty; that is, he ought not to be, and is not, *punished* by any law. Calvinistic theology affirms the contrary, and out of that evolves its doctrine of unconditional election, reprobation, and the eternal punishment of non-elect infants. For if all are equally guilty of Adam's sin, then, first, God is under no obligation to save any; and, secondly, he can select from the whole guilty mass—the mass of perdition, as Augustine phrases—those whom he wills, in his sovereign pleasure, and elect them to eternal life without any injustice to those not selected. Some Arminian writers also seem to favor the idea of infant guilt. But American Methodist Arminianism rejects this theory of inherited guilt, planting itself upon the axiom that

if personal volition is necessary to personal sin, the personal sin is necessary to personal guilt. The Ninth Article of Religion of the Church of England also affirmed the theory of hereditary guilt; but when Mr. Wesley adopted it among the Articles of the Methodist Church in America, he eliminated from it every word savoring of that doctrine, as may be seen by a comparison of the two articles.

THE NINTH ARTICLE, CHURCH OF ENGLAND.	THE SEVENTH ARTICLE, METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.
Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the FAULT and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is, of his own nature, inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit, and therefore IN EVERY PERSON BORN INTO THIS WORLD IT DOTH DESERVE GOD'S WRATH AND DAMNATION.	Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

This Ninth Article of the Church is based (Hardwick, Hist. of the Art.) on Article II of the Augsburg Confession, which was professedly Augustinian in its anthropology. It will be observed, then, (1) that in the Methodist Article, reflecting Arminian anthropology, the word FAULT is omitted. In the rejection of this word the Augustinian (Calvinistic) doctrine of innate personal fault was also rejected, so that, according to this standard, we are not guilty of a sin not of our choice. It will be noticed (2) that Wesley re-

jected the doctrine that, because of inherited evil nature, every one born into this world *deserveth God's wrath and damnation.* Dr. Whedon (Meth. Quar. Rev., Oct., 1883), commenting on these rejected doctrines, says: "We may say, therefore, conclusively, that these doctrines are not Methodism. We may say more—that Methodism does not merely ignore this dogma, but gives it a positive rejection and expulsion, so that it may be pronounced, as relative to Methodism, scarce less than a HERESY." What man is at birth he is by inheritance. He is the effect of an innumerable number of forces, over which he had no control, and for which he is therefore not responsible. The causes may be traced back through generations of ancestors; to the heights of mountains and depths of valleys, to rivers, plains, temperatures, governments—in a word, to the physical and mental conditions under which his ancestry has lived. This bent or bias of mind which these forces have produced, the affinity of the soul for things beautiful, truthful, holy, and ennobling, or for things gross and contemptible in their very crassness, is the raw material which the Will finds already in possession, but for which the person is no more responsible than he is for the complexion of his skin or the color of his hair. There can be no praise in inheritance, and there can be no blame. For whatever is beyond the sphere of the Will, must be beyond the sphere of rewards and punishments.

But if children have violated no law, and are not guilty, why are they punished with death and sickness and infirmities? This is the Calvinistic argu-

ment to prove the original *guilt* of human nature. It assumes these misfortunes to be penal judgments, which is not true, unless it be true that the blue eyes of a girl must be considered as a blessing, and the black eyes of her brother a penal curse. These evils which affect humanity are the consequences* of primal sin originally, because the human nature, that of Adam, into which the effects of the first sin entered, is the nature which we inherit, and we can not escape the consequences if we inherit that nature. One may inherit a bad constitution from a sickly parent, but by no method of reasoning can we persuade ourselves that he is responsible for the misfortune. Hence, Dr. Miner Raymond (Syst. Theol., Vol. II), teaching true Wesleyan Arminianism, says: "We deny that inherited infirmities are punishments. Mankind are responsible for what they are, no further than their character is self-imposed; what comes necessarily by transmission from ancestors is no fault of those upon whom they come. . . . Whatever countenance, therefore, the Scriptures may give to the idea that God imputes Adamic transgressions to Adam's posterity (which, by the way, is not a Bible formula) does not warrant the thought that God regards the race as guilty of the first sin, and therefore punishes them for it." Dr. Wilbur Fisk (Calvinistic Controversy) also teaches, "Guilt is not imputed until, by a voluntary rejection of the gospel, man makes the depravity of his nature the object of his own choice." Dr. Whedon, on "The Will," in a

* See Miley on The Atonement, page 71; and Entwickelung d. Paulin. Lehr., Leonhard Usteri, S. 35.

passage treating on "irresponsible sin," says: "Thus man, as born after the fall, possesses, even before any volitional act of his own, a fallen nature. As compared with what, by the perfect law of God, he ought to be, he is wrong, evil, morally evil; yet, as not being the author of his own condition, he is not responsible for his necessitatively received nature and moral state. His nature is no fault of his own until fully appropriated by the act of his own free will. That nature and state may doubtless be called *sin*, but only under a certain definition of the word. If all sin be *anomia*,* a disconformity to the law, then there may be a sinful nature or state, as well as a sinful act. But where that nature or state is necessitatively received by the being without his will, or received only by the act of a necessitated will, if sinful, it is not *responsibly* sinful. It thence would follow that there may be disconformity to the law, unrighteousness, evil, moral evil, sin, sinfulness, all without responsibility, guilt, ill desert, just moral condemnality, or punishment."

Farther, it is nowhere written in Scripture that "*in Adam all sinned.*" This phrase had its origin, as already shown, in a wrong translation. Dr. Weiss, on the passage referred to, notes: "To think that he (the apostle Paul) means that all have sinned *in Adam* as their forefather (cp. Phillipi and Meyer, *in loco*) is perfectly arbitrary, if once it is admitted that the Catholic traditional reference of ἐφ ᾧ to Adam is altogether mistaken; for the aorist which simply rep-

* 1 John iii, 4.

resents the fact that all have sinned as a complete fact (in consequence of that very εἰσῆλθεν), by no means compels us to think of something which has taken place in and with the individual transgression of Adam."* So Whedon: "But when the apostle declares that *all have sinned,* he declares not merely the natural disposition, but the *actual sinning* of all. The aorist, or past tense, here used of the word *sinned,* does in this Epistle often imply a general certain fact or state of facts. . . . All men sin; such is their nature when their probation presents itself. Such being their *normal* action, such must be their permanent *nature.*"† Godet comments extensively on the passage, giving the many significations which exegetes have adopted, himself holding the phrase as equivalent to all sinned in Adam; but he denies that the eternal destiny of mankind was bound up in the acts of Adam. "Nothing," says he, "of all that passed in the domain, in which we have Adam for our father, can be decisive for our eternal lot. The solidarity of individuals with the head of the family does not extend beyond the domain of natural life; what belongs to the higher life of man, his spiritual and eternal existence is not a matter of species, but of the individual.'"‡

Dr. Hodge says: "Even on the extremest realistic assumption that humanity as such is an entity, the act of Adam was not the act of all men. His

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* Biblical Theol., New Test.; Dr. B. Weiss, Prof. Theol., Berlin.

† Commentary on N. T., Romans.

‡ Commentary on Romans, American Ed.

sin was an intelligent act of self-determination; but an act of rational self-determination is a personal act. Unless, therefore, all men as persons existed in Adam, it is impossible that they acted his act. To say that a man acted thousands of years before his personality began does not rise even to the dignity of a contradiction. It has no meaning at all. It is a monstrous act to make the Bible contradict the common sense and the common consciousness of men."* The sum, then, of the foregoing is admitting original depravity to be sin, yet for that sin the race is not responsible at birth. It is a necessitated sin, and therefore not punishable, just as a necessitated holiness is not rewardable. The objection which is urged against this doctrine is, that if children are not guilty, then they had no need of a Redeemer; and if saved, they are saved by some other means than the blood of the Atoning Lamb. He came to save sinners. They are not sinners, and therefore he is not their Savior; from him, or through him, they receive no forgiveness nor sanctifying grace. This is an argument in words only. If he is not a real Savior of the children under this Arminian view, neither is he in the Calvinistic scheme or any modification of it, since, if guilty, they are guilty only of sin in a metaphysical sense, in the abstract; and if pardoned, they are therefore only metaphysically pardoned. But Armin-

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* Commentary on Romans, 236, —. See Tholuck *in loco* for some excellent remarks. Also Reuss, *Histoire d. l. Theologie Chrétienne*, pp. 56, 106, 120. His views of imputation, however, based on the verb καθίσταναι, can not be maintained, for the reason that that verb never has the meaning he says it has.

ianism presents Christ as a real Savior of childhood. While it is nowhere written in Scripture that children sinned in Adam, it is Scripturally true "*in Adam all die,*" and that, both physically and spiritually, human nature, apart from the influences of the Holy Spirit, is as darkness opposed to light. It is in a false relation to God, and so falls into the low plane of naturalism, and necessarily is affected by the laws which operate in that lower plane. Being thrown into a state contrary to itself as originally created, the soul is abnormal to itself, a victim to its own powers, so that it is destroyed within and without. God can not look upon it with complacency. It is a moral chaos, contrary to God's nature; and, as such, is therefore incapable of fellowship with God.

The infant inherits, we will assume, this abstracted nature; and though not guilty—that is, justly liable to *punishment* for it—is nevertheless thereby in an unholy state. This state is one of condemnation, not judicial, but as opposed to acceptation on the part of God; and as a state or condition may be designated according to its principal characteristics, this human nature is declared to be dead in sin. To ask now what would become of such had there been no Redeemer, is the same as if one should ask, What would be the quality of that thing, without which quality the thing could not exist? Had there been no Redeemer, Adam would have had no posterity. Children exist because, back of the first Adam, stood the second Adam, and to his Atonement does the race owe its existence. It was in Eden, in the very day of the fall, before children were born to Adam, that

the promise of a Redeemer was given; and hence Christ could say, in the most comprehensive sense: "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John xiv, 19.) But children are born, and are, because of this nature, at variance with the perfect law. The child's nature, thus apart from grace, is wrong and contrary to the will of God, and is therefore *bad*, though not guilty for the necessitated badness. One may have inherited a depraved character or a sickly constitution without being responsible for the bad inheritance; but the fact that one is not responsible does not cure the disease nor destroy the immoral tendencies; another force must needs come in from without and produce the necessary change. And so, though not amenable for the inherited badness of our Adamic nature, we nevertheless suffer the results of such a character, which inevitably produces voluntary sinfulness, and, if not delivered from the power and dominion of this badness, we must suffer the eternal results of it, since undestroyed badness is eternal badness. From this condition, whether living or dying, the Atonement delivers the infant heir of Adam; for the Atonement is a reconciliation. It reconciles the nature of man and the nature of God, by the change which it effects in the nature of the hitherto displacent creature. An atonement which does not, as an effectual cause, unite opposing parties, is not an atonement; for a real atonement must be both an expiation and a propitiation. Hence the need of a Savior for children, since the badness must be destroyed and the displacency removed, for which purpose the Son of God came.

CHAPTER IV.

CHILDREN UNDER CHRIST.

FOR the sake of clearness we have been considering human nature as abstracted from all influences of the Holy Ghost; as such it was purely the Adamic nature, bound by its own inability and alien to God. But as a matter of fact, such a nature was never born.* The fall of man was not a surprise to God. Hence the atonement was not an after-thought, but a provision originating in infinite love, determined upon in eternity, accomplished in time. Through this atonement the child is born into this world wholly different from what it would be, were there no atonement, assuming for the moment that there would have been any children born into this world had no atonement been provided. Under Adam the child possesses tendencies—strong bias toward evil which drives it deeper and deeper into sin without any power of deliverance. Human nature under Adam is the Laocoon entangled in the meshes of the

* "For allowing that all the souls of men are dead in sin by *nature*, this excuses none, seeing there is no man that is in a state of mere nature; there is no man, unless he has quenched the Spirit, that is, wholly void of the grace of God. No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called *natural conscience*. But this is not natural, it is more properly termed *preventing grace*." (Wesley's sermon, "Working out Our Own Salvation.")

deadly serpents which crush it in their all-encircling folds and diffuse through every part their deadly poison. In the famous statue in the Vatican, the children are involved with the parent in the embrace of the serpents. But this statue would not truthfully represent human nature at birth under Christ. In opposition to the sinward tendencies, the evil-ward propensities derived from Adam, there is set up in the nature of the child through the atonement, tendencies and propensities toward the good, which war with the bias toward evil, and restrain its terrible power. The child will, but it is not *compelled* by its Adamic inheritance, yield to evil, since through this same atonement the Spirit of God is not a mere spectator of human life and history, but a helping dynamic power to aid every one coming into the world. The child under Christ, then, would be represented rather by that beautiful symbol in the Capitol at Rome, of the "human soul with its choice of innocence or evil close at hand, in the pretty figure of a child, clasping a dove to her bosom, but assaulted by a snake." (Hawthorne's Transformation.) It may be that the serpent will coil around the child; it may be that its heel will crush the serpent's head.

The atonement of Christ was an atonement for the race, and the benefits of it accrue to every member of the race; whether lost or saved, no one has ever lived that has not received the grace of God in measure. These benefits as far as they relate to childhood may be briefly summarized, but the vast importance of the subject entitles it to, and demands, a more extended treatment.

The relation which children sustain to Christ, and he as the world's Redeemer sustains to them, is clearly seen in the fifth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. What the consequences of Adam's sin were for the human nature at its source, has already been shown and need not be brought forward again except for the purpose of illustration. The contrast between the results of Adam's transgression and of Christ's obedience in the mind of the Apostle will perhaps be more forcibly apprehended if the several antitheses in that remarkable section of the chapter named from verses 15 to 19 are put one over against the other, thus (italics our own):

RESULT OF ADAM'S SIN.	RESULT OF CHRIST'S OBEDIENCE.
But not as the trespass. . . .	So also is the *free gift.*
Vs. 15. For if by the *trespass* of one, *many* died. . . .	Vs. 15. Much more did the *grace* of God and the gift by the *grace* of the *one* man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the *many*. . . .
Vs. 16. And not as through one that sinned; for the judgment came of one *unto condemnation*. . . .	Vs. 16. So is the gift. . . . But the free gift came of many trespasses *unto justification*. . . .
Vs. 17. For if by the trespass of the *one death reigned* through the one. . . .	Vs. 17. Much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness *reign in life* through the *one*, even Jesus Christ.
Vs. 18. So then as through one *trespass* the judgment came unto all men to *condemnation*. . . .	Vs. 18. Even so through the *one act of righteousness* the free gift came unto all men to *justification of life.*
Vs. 19. For as through one man's disobedience *the many were made sinners*. . . .	Vs. 19. Even so through the obedience of the one *shall the many be made righteous*. . . .

Verse 15. But not as the trespass, *so also is the free gift.* This free gift is the opposite of the "trespass" in its effects; the latter causes death, the gift produces life. It is the antidote to the trespass. The trespass holds human nature up to the wrath of God, the free gift supervenes and human nature is reconciled to God. Were this not true in some such sense, the free gift would be no gift. But the argument of the apostle is that the reconciling influence of the atonement, the ground of the gift or grace of God, is stronger than the accusing powers of the Adamic sin in human nature. Hence he says: "For if by the trespass of the one the many [*οἱ πολλοὶ*—all; see Tholuck on Rom.; Meyer's Com.] died."

Much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many. Here death in its largest sense as embracing physical and spiritual death is meant, as is manifest from its antithesis to "*life,*" which can but signify the immortal life.* But when did all die? All died

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* "Weder der leibliche Tod ist an und für sich da gewesen oder hat zu irgend einer Zeit geherrscht ohne den geistlichen Tod, noch giebt es einen geistlichen Tod an und für sich, ohne dasz derselbe zugleich mit dem leiblichen Tod in Verbindung stände." (Krabbe, Die Lehre v. d. Sünde, S. 189.) See also Messner, Lehre die Apostel, 210–213. Reuss remarks: "Le raisonnement de l'apotre dans ces versets pourrait paraître se fonder sur ce que le terme de *θάνατος* est employé au sens propre et physique, tandis que *ζωή* n'en serait pas simplement l'opposé, mais contiendrait encore l'idée de la félicité." (Hist. Christ. Theol. Livre IV, 118.) Tholuck in his Comm. on Romans insists that "*ἀπέθανον* is not used here simply in the limited signification of corporeal death, but comprehends the *θάνατος* in its widest extent."

when Adam sinned; that is, the nature which all have was then alienated from God, and it was then that the grace of God and the gifts by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded unto the many (*οἱ πολλοὶ*) *then* yet to be. If, then, children are, on the one side, born with a sinful nature and obnoxious to God, this state of sinfulness either continues from the beginning of the race, notwithstanding the atonement, or else it is done away with, as far as the relation of the child to God is concerned—done away as to condemnation, by the grace which the Apostle says has abounded unto all. To assume that this grace is of no avail against the fault of Adam, which also abounded to all, is absurd; for if any child is saved, it must be saved through the regenerating results of the atonement, and the inherited depravity is swallowed up, covered over, by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ. Hence, all children, instead of being born obnoxious to the wrath of God, come into life under the gracious influence of Christ's death.

The atonement reaches backward to the fall, and forward to the culmination of human history. Through the atonement to be made "in the fullness of time," and which was of saving power before it was historically accomplished on Calvary, and under the gracious influence of which human history began, Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, the prophets and holy priests, and true sons of Israel—all who died "in the faith, not having received the promises" (Heb. xi, 13)—entered into fellowship with God here and eternal felicity in the life beyond, because Christ Jesus, as the Redeemer, was

"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. xiii, 8.) In Hebrews x, 1–4, it is written: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, not the very image of the things, they can never, with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh. Else would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having been once cleansed, would have had no more conscience of sins? But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance made of sins year by year. *For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.*" So, then, if the atonement was not effectual before the actual spilling of Christ's blood, how, or in what manner, were the people of God in the ages preceding delivered from sin? In all ages there has been but one Name, one Redeeming Power, through which men, whether Jew or Gentile, could find salvation, though the Name and the Power may have been unknown or but faintly understood. But however far back into the generations preceding the Advent we extend the sin-cleansing and God-reconciling power of the atonement, we do violence to the truth and the simplest reasoning, unless we carry back that Power to the beginning of sin in ruined Eden.

In his Epistle to the Ephesian Church, St. Paul says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies, even as he hath chosen us in him *before the foundation of the world.*" The election, and the slaying of the Lamb, became facts in the mind of God at the same timeless period, before the founda-

tion of the world. The worlds were made for the Christ, and he has ever been the Coming One. So the Apostle, in the third chapter of the same epistle, speaks of the unfolding of the thought of God in the incarnation of the eternal *Logos*, and of the grace given him (Paul) to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the dispensation (*οἰκονομία*) of the mystery which *from all ages* (*ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων*) *hath been hid in God*. Through the grace-bringing power of this eternal atonement have men everywhere and in all ages come into the possession of that indefinable yearning for the Good which comes to the surface in the poets and philosophers before religion in Greece was reduced to Art, and in Rome was made synonymous with Patriotism. Through this same power have men everywhere the ability to perform moral duties, which is not natural—that is, according to the abstracted fallen Adamic nature—but which is the result of the prevenient grace, the working of that "true light which lighteneth every man coming into the world." Here the fine statement of the Danish theologian, Martensen, is most apt: "The manifestation of the Son of God in the fullness of the times points back to his pre-existence,—by pre-existence, understanding not merely that he had being originally in the Father, but also that he had being originally in the world, as the mediator between the Father and the world; it appertains to the essence of the Son, not only to have his life in the Father, but to live also in the world. As 'the heart of God the Father,' he is at the same time the 'eternal heart of the world,' through

which the Divine life streams into creation. As the *Logos* of the Father, he is at the same time the eternal *Logos* of the world, through whom the Divine light shines into creation. 'In him was life, and the life was the light of men.' (John i, 4.) He is the ground and source of all reason in the creation, be it in men or angels, in Greek or Jew. He is the principle of the law and promises, under the Old Testament, the eternal light which shines in the darkness of heathenism, and all the holy grains of truth which are found in heathenism were sowed by the Son of God in the souls of men. He is the eternal principle of Providence in the tangled web of human life; for all the powers of existence, all ideas and angels, are instruments to carry out the will of the all-ordering, all-controlling *Logos*. During his pre-existence, however, he was merely the essential, not the actual, mediator between God and the creature; for the antagonism between the created and the uncreated was as yet done away with merely as to the essence, not as to existence (Essentia, Existentia); the strife between God and the sinful world was healed merely in idea, not in life and reality." The Methodist theologian, Dr. Pope, is no less comprehensive in his view of Christ's restoring and conserving work in humanity: "The gift of righteousness to the race, before the succession of its history began, was of the nature of a provision to counteract the effects of sin, when original sin should become actual. Hence it follows of necessity that the benefit of the atonement provided before *the foundation of the world* was a free gift to the coming race of mankind. That gift was the restoration of the Holy

Spirit—not, indeed, as the indwelling spirit of regeneration, but as the spirit of enlightenment, striving, and conviction. Man did not set out on his way of sorrow without this preparatory Comforter. The virtue of the atonement began when the evil of sin began. The gospel was first preached when sin was first condemned; preached through the sentence passed upon Satan, the instrumental cause of human sin, thus meeting sin in its very origin."*

Verse 18. "So, then, as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation, *even so through the one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life.*" On the Adamic side the condemnation came upon human nature; but as a Divine offset to that, the Apostle puts, as the result of Christ's obedience, "Justification to life." First, when did this justification come upon the race? and, secondly, what is this justification to life? Grounding our thoughts on the retroactive influence of the atonement, the justification came when the condemnation came. Without the saving virtue of the atonement, Adam would have perished immediately under the condemnation. In Adam, human nature fell; in Christ, the second Adam, it was justified; and since, had there been no atonement, there would have been no posterity to Adam, no continuation of fallen human nature, the justification must have come when Adam was permitted to live, and posterity permitted to come into existence. In our thought, we must go

* Compend. Christ. Theol., Vol. II, pp. 56, 57.

back to the beginning, and while we behold the successive generations coming forth into life with the "trail of the serpent over them all," we must also see that over them is the wrath-averting grace of Christ's atonement. "As Adam brought a general condemnation," says Fletcher of Madeley, "and a universal seed of death upon all infants, so Christ brings upon them a general justification and a universal seed of life." And in agreement therewith, and with the logical requirement of a consistent Arminianism, Dr. Pope teaches: "The condemnation resting upon the race, as such, is removed by the virtue of the one oblation, *beginning with the beginning of sin. The nature of man received the atonement* (Rom. vii) once for all. God in Christ is reconciled to the race of Adam." Each individual born into the world begins his existence under the same fundamental conditions as the race began its existence. Hence, if David, voicing the profound conviction of the human heart, should say, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," he could also say, under the inspiration of the Eternal Spirit: "Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou art my God from the womb of my mother." (Ps. xxii, 9, 10.) "For thou hast possessed my reins; thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Ps. cxxxix, 13, 16, 17.)

What this justification is, may be more clearly

understood when we understand what its opposite "condemnation" is, as here set forth by the Apostle. This condemnation, as the whole chapter shows, was the judicial sentence passed upon the race by the Divine Judge, and it involved death, both physical and spiritual. Man is declared to be what his act has made him—a sinner; and justice, in declaring that, declares the sentence of eternal banishment from God, the source of all life; and thus man, as a sinner, is doomed to undergo the full penalty of violated law. But immediately at this point, and parallel with it, Divine Love enters, and through the atonement, man receives justification, in order to eternal life, the opposite of eternal death. Humanity, as a whole, is justified by the death of Christ, just as a whole humanity was condemned in Adam. This does not mean that every distinct individuality, as such, was actually justified in Christ's death; for that would be but to fall into the Calvinistic error that one can be acted upon before he really exists. But it does mean that, as human nature is individualized, and as that individual comes into this world, he then particularizes this justification in himself which had been wrought out and declared for the whole race.

Justification is usually spoken of as a *forensic* term only, as signifying simply "acquittal," and as being an act in God's mind *towards* the sinner. Now in a human court of justice that may be the full meaning of the word, since the question before such a tribunal is not whether the culprit is morally culpable, but whether he is legally so. But since God is a *moral* judge, he can not acquit the sinner if he is

guilty, though he may *pardon* him. He can not declare one to be just apart from justice. Justification, then, can not be limited in its signification to the bare notion of acquittal; but like the term reconciliation, which has been made to denote a change in man towards God, when it is really a reciprocal idea, involving a turning of man toward God and of God toward man, it must involve a twofold idea—a recognition of, and a declaration of, the right relationship of the sinner before the law. The recognition is based, not upon the character of the man considered abstractly in himself, but upon that character as it is *pardoned* in *Christ*. Back of God's act of justifying is Christ's act of dying, "the just for the unjust." Without the atonement, there could have been no justification Hence Dr. Raymond says: "An unjust man, a sinner, is somehow made a just, a righteous man, or he is considered and treated as such, or both of these ideas included."

Children, then, are justified before God *in Christ;* they are brought out from under the state of condemnation or displacency toward God into a *state of salvation*, and there is no absolute necessity why from this state the child should ever fall. No gift of God is ever given in order to be lost.

Seemingly, perhaps only in seeming, is this opposed to the view of Mr. Watson, who says (Vol. II, p. 58): "As to infants, they are not indeed born justified and regenerate; so that to say that original sin is taken away, as to infants, by Christ, is not the correct view of the case." Let us grant that infants are not regenerate in the usual technical sense, and that

original sin is not taken away, it does not follow, therefore, that infants are not born under the atonement, and so are justified. Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit upon the individual soul—not upon the race as a unit, at any given time; but justification is a declaration toward the race as a unit, based upon the atonement, and as each member of the race comes into existence, he partakes of that justification.

It is no objection to this that original sin remains; for if that sin is a tendency toward evil, *a sinwardness*, such remains also in the adult believer. The ideas that children are not born in a justified state, but are born under the "free gift, the effects of the righteousness of one which extended to all men," as Mr. Watson says, have about them a quality of irreconcilability. For, if infants are not justified by the free gift under which they are born, of what value is the "free gift" to them? What is the result of the effects of the righteousness of one which extended to all men? Such a gift is no gift to them as infants, for it conveys nothing; such, "effects" of such righteousness are no effects, for they effect nothing. Rather more agreeable to our view is that of Bishop Merrill, who, while dissenting from the affirmation of infant regeneration, *as we do also* in its properly accepted sense, but asserting that infants are in the kingdom, says: "We are therefore led to conclude that, without the formal powers of regeneration, and without any appreciable exercise of active spiritual agency, they are, by virtue of the unconditional benefits of the atonement, placed in such a state of gracious accept-

ance as answers to the gracious state reached by adults only through justifying faith." *

Another of the benefits, then, accruing to infants through the atonement is that they are justified, are in a state of salvation, which is not different from the same state in an adult believer. Here again the same principle which applies to the adult applies also to the infant; for we are not "justified by faith" in the sense that it is the *faith* which pardons, but by the Judge of all, through virtue of the atonement. This is plainly stated by the Apostle in verse 19: "For as through one man's disobedience the many were made [*κατεστάθησαν*] sinners, *even so, through the obedience of one shall many be made* [*κατασταθήσονται*] righteous." The Apostle seems to have no other idea than, as men were made sinners through Adam, that through the merits of Christ's death all men are cleared from the condemnation of Adam's actual sin. If this is the meaning of the Apostle, and if it is not the plain meaning, then there is nothing plain in the Word of God that all men come into existence in a state of rightness toward God. From this there are two possible modes of escape—first, emphatically to deny it, without any reason for the denial; and secondly, to affirm, with Dr. Hodge and other Imputationists, that "*καθιστημι* never in the New Testament means *to make*, in the sense of effecting or causing a person or thing to be other than it was before," and that therefore, "when the Apostle says that the many were (*κατεστάθησαν*) constituted sinners by the disobedience of

* Christian Baptism, p. 25.

Adam, it can not mean that the many were thereby rendered sinful, but that his disobedience was the ground of their being placed in the category of sinners. It constituted a good and sufficient reason for so regarding and treating them." (Comm. on Rom.) But all this is simply saying that God regarded men as being what in reality they were not. Such a thing is inconceivable. It is contrary to the Divine nature. God can not do wrong, nor see wrongly. He sees things as they are. If men were not *made sinners* in the manner previously shown, they could not be justly treated as sinners; and if they were not made righteous, they could not be treated or regarded as being righteous. God is under no necessity for resorting to fiction, and a theology that is true to the facts of God's revelation and the intuitions of humanity, rests on other foundations.

The meaning which Dr. Hodge gives to *καθίστημι*, upon which meaning the whole theological fiction above mentioned rests, that verb never has in the New Testament; but the meaning which he objects to, is its usual meaning. In the New Testament the word occurs twenty-one times: Matt. xxiv, 45, 47; xxv, 21, 23; Luke xii, 14, 42, 44; Acts vi, 3; vii, 10, 27, 35; xvii, 15; Rom. v, 19 (twice); Titus i, 15; Heb. v, 1; vii, 28; viii, 3; James iii, 6; iv, 4; 2 Peter i, 8. In none of these instances is there any ground for the astounding statement of the renowned exegete. On the contrary, every passage establishes the position that "*καθίστημι* signifies *to make*, in the sense of effecting or causing a person or thing to be other than it was before." In 2 Peter we read: "If

these things be in you and abound, they *make* you [*καθίστησιν*] that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Most assuredly the abounding of these Christian graces would make or constitute these Christians different from what they were before. In Matt. xxiv, 45, 47, our Lord says: "Who, then, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath *made* [*κατέστησεν*] ruler over his household, giving them meat in due season?" Was not this man different when made a ruler from what he was before? Before he was made a ruler he certainly was not a ruler. The same remarks apply to these other words: "Verily I say unto you that he shall *make* him ruler over all his goods." And in Matt. xxv, 21, 23: "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will *make* thee ruler over many things." In Luke xii, 14: "And he said unto him, Man, who *made* me a judge or a divider over you?"

In these instances, selected at random, and in the other passages, it will be seen, on the most cursory examination that the word signifies to *make* or to *constitute* one what he was not before, and that it is never used to regard one as being what he is not. Cremer (Biblico-Theol. Lex.) remarks on the word, in the passage under consideration, Rom. v, 19, that: "The choice of the somewhat peculiar term, instead of the simple *γίγνεσθαι*, is not to be explained on the supposition that the word means *to present, to cause to appear*,—a false supposition, since *καθιστάναι*, unlike *συνιστάναι*, denotes an actual appointment or setting down in a definite place," etc. Robinson (N. T.

Lex.) defines the word thus: "*Καθίστημι, to cause to be, to render, to make.* Pass., *to be,* or *become, to be rendered,* made."

Olshausen says the word certainly signifies to be set forth as something, and by the setting forth to be declared something, so that the expression is parallel with "*imputed for righteousness.*" But as the discourse relates to Divine acts, it must be borne in mind that God can not pronounce any one to be what he is not."

Tholuck observes: "They who cling to the objective view are obliged to translate *καθιστάσθαι declared,* which, however, is a sense that can not be defended."

Godet is in agreement: "The real gradation, from one verse to the other, is as follows: 'They were *treated* as sinners, by the sentence of death (vs. 18); for they were really made sinners in Adam' (vs. 19.)"

De Wette, in opposition to Grotius, Beza, Bengel, and others, says: "The thought of the Apostle is, that men are not merely reckoned as sinners, but in reality become such—*wirklich Sünder geworden.*" So when the Apostle says, "Through the offense of one many were *made* sinners," he must be understood as teaching that all men were made sinners in reality, and that God saw them, and declared them to be for that reason really and truly as such. This being true, it then follows that all who are born of Adam are in a most true and literal sense made righteous or put in a justified state—a state of real salvation, through the grace of the atonement, the free gift which hath abounded (overflowed) unto all men.

CHAPTER V.

THE CORE OF THE PROBLEM.

IN the study of this profound question we can not stop with the results obtained from the previous chapter. These results themselves suggest another and a higher question: Are children born regenerated? This is the heart of the problem, and is therefore entitled to the utmost consideration. Not that there is any possibility of engrafting such a dogma upon evangelical truth, but for the reason that it is high time that popular misunderstanding of the first principles of Arminian theology should give way and the teachings of early Methodism be fairly apprehended. That there has been a drift, perhaps unconscious, from the original tenets of the fathers of Methodism on this subject will scarcely be denied. They did not teach that infants are born regenerate, however, but on the contrary that they come into the world in a depraved condition. "Arminius, Wesley, Fletcher, and Fisk could not be said to hold that infants are 'born regenerate.' The true statement would be that they are born into the world depraved; but, as Fisk expresses it, 'the atonement meets them with its provisions at their entrance.' Their justification or regeneration, so far as it exists, is not *congenital* but *post-genital.* The atonement fills this probationary world with its influence, and the human being re-

ceives his atoning justification consequent upon his having entered into it. It is as if a room were filled with a purifying influence, and a leper is cleansed by entering within its walls. The question is not as to the genuineness or the depth of the depravity as derived from Adam, or from the immediate parent. That depravity is done up in all the elements of the fœtal man. Nor does regeneration, infant or adult, absolutely remove it until completed at the glorification; for both infant and adult still retain susceptibility to temptation and sin, mortality, disease, and death, until the final renovation." *

Thus wrote the late Dr. D. D. Whedon, one of the truly great theologians of the century and of the Christian Church. In the same *Review*, from which we quote, he has presented the theology of Wesley, Fletcher, and Fisk, with such comments thereon expressing his own views, in such a manner that, although somewhat extensive, we reproduce them here as, to some extent, the correct teaching of Arminian Methodism:

"Miss Beecher announces that a new development is taking place in the Methodist Episcopal Church, which, she imagines, will result in childhood Church-membership. We doubt the *newness* of the matter she describes. To show how great our advance is, she quotes a passage from Arminius, in which that great Doctor taught that infants are by 'the covenant comprehended and adjudged in their parents,' and so have 'sinned' and become 'obnoxious to God's wrath.' But if she will turn to his works (Vol. I, page 318, American edition), she will find that by that same covenant there is, in his opinion, a provision of grace in which children are so included, as putative believers, 'as not to seem to be obnoxious to condemnation.'

* Methodist Quarterly Review, January, 1873.

Both of these views are consistent, and may be correct. Condemned by the covenant in Adam, living children, like believers, may be justified in Christ. If Miss Beecher will turn to Fletcher's 'Checks,' Vol. I, page 461, she will find that writer expressly maintaining the doctrine of both the 'justification' and the 'regeneration' of living infants. In a note he adds these remarkable words: 'Those who start at every expression they are not used to, will ask if *our Church admits the justification of infants?* I answer, UNDOUBTEDLY; since her clergy, by her direction, say over myriads of infants, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it has pleased thee to REGENERATE *this infant.*"' He then proceeds to prove that this *regeneration* is antecedent to baptism, and universal. And he instructs us so to construe his mention of 'the regeneration of infants,' in his Appeal (*a work adopted in our course of ministerial study*), Part V, Inference 7, as designating regeneration unconditional upon baptism, and of course as existing in the case of every *living* infant. So firmly convinced was Fletcher that Adamic depravity does not preclude infant regeneration, that it was in a powerful work in favor of depravity that he maintained such regeneration. If this be a new development, Miss Beecher may be thus assured it is by no means 'a new doctrine.' According to Fletcher's interpretation, indeed, our infant baptismal service teaches the same doctrine. Our baptismal Scripture lesson from Mark x, 13, etc., which declares 'of such is the kingdom of heaven,' teaches, in his view, that *infants are truly born of the Spirit as ground of their now being baptismally 'born of water.'* They are to receive the outward sign because they *have received* the inward grace. We say not that these teachings of Fletcher are an article of our Church faith, nor that they are true or false. We only say that they are found in one of the standards which has always been put by our Church into the hands of her young ministers; and such is even there affirmed to be the doctrine of our standing Ritual. If Fletcher's interpretations be true, Miss Beecher will specially observe, *we have been proclaiming living infant regeneration at every infant baptism from the very foundation of our Church.* But this Arminian and Fletcherian view is very different from her Pelagian denial of a depravity by nature derived from Adam.

"Mr. Wesley's views of the baptismal Scripture lesson appear scarce different from Fletcher's. 'The kingdom of heaven'

there mentioned he held to be the 'kingdom set up in the world' (see his comment on Mark x, 14, and Matt. xix, 14); that is, the regenerate earthly Church; he held that little children 'have a right to enter' that kingdom or Church; and that 'the members of the kingdom' 'are such;' that is 'natural' children, or 'grown persons of a child-like spirit.' That membership he interprets to be not contingent and prospective, or conditioned upon death, but real and present. And yet he believed that no one can be within that kingdom who is not regenerate. (See his note on John iii, 5.) We have, then, the syllogistic premises: All members of the kingdom of heaven are regenerate; children are such members, and then what conclusion a logician like Mr. Wesley would draw we leave others to decide.

"Dr. Fisk's view appears in the following words: 'Although all moral depravity, derived or contracted, is damning in its nature, still, by virtue of the atonement, the destructive effects of derived depravity are counteracted; and guilt is not imputed until by a voluntary rejection of the gospel remedy man makes the depravity of his nature the object of his own choice. Hence, although, abstractly considered, this depravity is destructive to the possessors, *yet through the grace* of the gospel ALL ARE BORN FREE FROM CONDEMNATION. So the apostle Paul: "As by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."' (Calvinistic Controversy.)

"Here we are told that all are born 'free from condemnation;' and this freedom from condemnation is identical with the 'justification' named by St. Paul. And this freedom from condemnation or justification (not merely a title to contingent prospective justification) is at birth upon each living individual infant; and universal, being in spite of our depravity derived from the atonement. The infant does not wait for death before he is justified. Death, actual or approaching, is no condition of salvation.

"In regard to Mr. Fletcher's doctrine of infant justification we remark:

"1. No one affirms that the regeneration of an infant, as taught by Fletcher, is psychologically absurd, or contrary to human or Christian consciousness. *The doctrine of infant re-*

generation, either unconditional or conditional upon baptism, is no new doctrine, but has been a dogma in all the great sections of the Church, whether Greek, Roman, or Protestant. This is a valid contradiction to Dr. Nadal's statement, that infant regeneration is 'in the teeth of the teachings of the Orthodox Church of all ages.' The regeneration of the infant is nothing different in nature from that in the adult, except as modified by its subject; and the use of the term is in both cases equally proper, involving no innovation in theology of either thought or language. If an infant can be depraved, it can also be undepraved; *if it can be positively unregenerate, it can also be regenerate.* In the infant nature as truly as in the adult there may exist all the potencies, predispositions, and predeterminate tendencies, natural or gracious, for an actual, though not responsible, moral nature, good or bad.

"2. The doctrine of depravity is neither invalidated in, nor modified by, the doctrine of infant regeneration, whether unconditional or conditioned upon birth, baptism, or death, actual or approaching. In either case, the depravity comes from Adam, is by nature, and is equally complete; and, in either case, regeneration comes from Christ, and is by grace, being extra to and above nature. The unborn John the Baptist was 'filled with the Holy Ghost' (Luke i, 15), and 'leaped' at the approach of the mother of the unborn Savior. The unborn Jesus was 'that holy thing.' And such cases at once explode the objection of the 'manifest absurdity' of 'regeneration between conception and birth.' Nor is there any more absurdity in the infant being *regenerated* between conception and birth, than in his being *depraved* at conception or between conception and birth. And this would seem to finish, too, all the argument about the absurdity of generation and regeneration being simultaneous.

"3. If Arminius, Wesley, Fletcher, and Fisk are right in their positions, then the Arminian doctrine of falling from grace must be true. All adult sinners are apostates. And we see the reason why Calvinists must reject those positions unless they would become Arminians. All who become unregenerate or unjustified—that is, all adult sinners, as Fletcher expresses it—have 'sinned away the justification of infants.' Or, as Fisk says, the 'man makes the depravity of his nature the object of his choice,' and not until then is 'sin imputed unto him.' If

there be those happy exceptions, who have evidently not 'sinned away the justification of infants,' Fletcher would doubtless have held them to be Christians, and at responsible age have admitted them to communion. And an Arminian like Fletcher would have no difficulty with our Lord's declaration to Nicodemus, 'Except a man be born again,' etc.; for he would understand that such words are addressed to all apostates; that is, to all adult sinners, entirely irrespective of any past experience, whether of an infant or a previous adult regeneration.

"To all this we may add, that the seventeenth of our Articles of Faith declares that 'Baptism is . . . a sign of regeneration;' and that 'the baptism of children is to be retained in the Church;' that is, children are to receive the 'sign of regeneration.' But, surely, the sign ought not to be conferred where the reality does not and may never exist. The 'outward sign of an inward grace' is a false sign, where there is no 'inward grace.'"

There are those, however, who can see nothing in regeneration, other than that which, with its concomitants, is experienced by adults. All conceptions of what is involved in regeneration are limited to *that* period of human life. Where this will lead us, if true to our logic, we shall presently see.

For instance, regeneration involves a moral change of character. That signifies a change or redisposition of the affections and desires. But, since the infant has no moral affections or desires, and has therefore never exercised them so that they must be changed in quality, it follows of course that the child is not regenerate.

Further, if regeneration means, as it does, a change of will, so that the volitionating power is changed from one direction to another—that is, is brought from under the dominating influence of carnal instincts into subjection to the law of God—then,

since the child has no will, but acts as it is acted upon, not exercising, consciously and deliberately, the power of choice, it follows again that the child is not regenerate. Whatever else we may say of regeneration, the power of God's Spirit on the human will is the essence of it. All other effects on the soul flow from and are subordinate to this moral change of the will—the seat of personality.

But if this reasoning is correct, we are driven to a conclusion worse than the dogmas of ultra Calvinism concerning non-elect infants. For, since the psychological nature of all children is the same, no child dying in infancy can be saved; since, for the above reasons, no child can be regenerated.

But the reasoning is not faulty. It is our limitations of grace that are in fault. The error lies in the application—in an effort to apply the doctrine of regeneration, with all of its theological definitions, in the *same sense* to children as it is applied to adults. This can not be done. On the other hand, if we lay aside the limitations of technical terms, which have an established meaning, and rightly so in their application to adult humanity—to whom revelation is primarily adapted, and to whom it is primarily given—and ask ourselves, In what does the acceptance of the adult believer differ from that of the child in the sight of God? or, in what does the *righteous quality* of the adult soul differ from that of the child soul? we shall find, if we are true to Scriptural principles, that the state of the child is equally acceptable to God with that of the regenerated adult.

Such is our conclusion: "*The state of the living*

infant is essentially the same for an infant as the state into which regeneration brings the adult."

What the processes are in bringing about this *state* it is not possible to determine, any more than they can be in the adult. But, whatever grace is bestowed upon the child-nature through the atonement, the will is not changed, for it has not yet been brought into conscious activity. This is also true of other powers of the soul. But over against the tendency to evil, there is originated, by the Holy Ghost, the tendency to the good. This is a restraining power over the tendency to evil, and the same may be affirmed of the other powers and capacities of the soul.

In Christian homes, where this work of the Holy Spirit on human nature is recognized, and these tendencies toward, and affection for, the good and the holy, are piously nurtured and developed, they come to maturity at an early age. The child, under the sweet example of holy living and prayer on the part of those who gave it being in the world—the most sacred act of mortals—may enter into a conscious sense of fellowship with God, without ever having served conscious apprenticeship to Satan. The path to Paradise does not lead through the depths of Gehenna.

If the child dies, this work is consummated by Him who began it; if it lives, it develops continually, as we have said, until the child obtains conscious experience. Even then, when the precise moment of conscious acceptance was, the child may never know—a fact attested by the experience of eminent Christians in every walk of life.

This, it must be admitted, while theoretically true,

is not always actually true. Why it is not always practically true is not because it is not true at all, but for the reason that the child, with the opening of its senses and the consequent awakening and growth of desires and instincts, without a corresponding developing of the will (the higher faculties being developed last), falls an easy victim to the sinward tendencies already wrapt up in its nature. The lower qualities of the child-nature have, so to speak, the start of the higher; by use, physical desires are strengthened; latent tendencies rise to the surface, and are transformed into acts, and these, by repetition, become stereotyped in habit. Then again, in heathen lands, or in families in Christian lands resembling heathen families in this respect, the inwrought bias toward the heavenly is soon overcome by the co-existing and ever-active tendency toward the evil, because of the lack of holy nurture, the deadening influence of bad example, and the other manifold and subtle influences arising from unspiritual environments. These affect the moral nature of the child in the most susceptible and plastic period of its existence. A child is more susceptible to the influences of its surroundings than a person who has the power of will; for in the child there is lacking the resisting quality which enables the grown person to overcome, in some degree, the stream of tendencies flowing in upon him. Mr. Herbert Spencer, speaking in the high name of science, says: "It is a corollary from that primordial truth, which, as we have seen, underlies all truth that *whatever amount of power an organism expends in any shape is the correlate and equivalent of a power*

that was taken into it from without." (Principles of Biology, p. 57; italics ours.) Our environments, then, in the sensitive period of life, determine very much the quality of our whole after-life; and in the light of this tremendous truth, affirmed both by the laws of nature and the teachings of revelation, we apprehend the profound significance of Christ's saying, that it were better for one that a millstone were tied about his neck, and he were cast into the depths of the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

As the child, then, may never know the moment when the blighting effects of unholy environment determined the bent of his will, or gave character to the trend or direction of his moral energies, so he may never know the precise hour when the Holy Spirit of God laid in the unconscious depths of his soul the foundations of a life which should grow with the years, and develop into the final glory of a perfect creation. The feeling, the consciousness of love for God and our Blessed Redeemer may, and, as a matter of fact, often does, precede the exercise of the child's reason. And even if the child does not experience this relation toward God till the age of reason, it is not the reason which then convinces the child, but the felt fact in the child's heart, about which he can not reason, and which exists independent of the reason.

Nevertheless, of such transcendent importance is this matter to the Church and to every individual, that *there must come a time in the history of every child when there shall be a public and formal recognition of the claims of God, a conscious acceptance of the work of grace previously accomplished, and a deliberate sur-*

render to the Lord Christ as a personal Redeemer. Failing to do this is to resist the Holy Ghost, to renounce the work already done, and is therefore a falling away from, and a deliberate forfeiture of, that justified state produced in the soul by the Holy Spirit.

Such, then, are the benefits accruing to children through the atonement of our Lord. Children sustain a vital relation to the Redeemer; for they are redeemed by his blood, and receive in measure justifying grace. Whether this grace is common grace or saving grace, matters not. The distinction is theological, and not real; for there are not *in essentia* two kinds of grace, since all grace is saving grace, if not resisted. Standing, then, on an equality with the justified adult relative to the saving merits of Christ's death, children have *therefore* equal right with such to membership in the universal Church of Christ. The right of both to such membership rests on precisely the same ground.

But if the child has a Scriptural right to membership in the universal Church, he has the same right to membership in any phase or branch of that Church. To deny him such recognition is to violate the very charter by virtue of which such a Church itself exists.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRIST'S RECOGNITION OF CHILD-MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH.

IN the fortieth chapter of Isaiah the prophet announces two events of primal importance to the Jewish race—(1) The restoration of the captive nation, and (2) the establishment of the everlasting Messianic kingdom. This last is the spiritual side, or concomitant, of the former, an interpretation based upon the authority of John the Baptist and our Lord himself. It is of Christ, then, as the restorer and upbuilder of Zion, that Isaiah prophesies when he cries joyfully: "O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountains; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid. Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come as a mighty one, and his arm shall rule for him. Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him." (xl. 9, 10.)

Of this Coming One, *two particulars* are prophesied, which set forth as a distinguishing characteristic his all-embracing love for the spiritual house of Israel: "*He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that give suck.*"

It is not difficult to assume in the usually un-

critical, off-hand way that this minute description of the Messiah's spirit is simply a general statement of his care for Israel, or that it is an Oriental poetizing of Christ's tenderness for the weak and lowly. We understand it (1) as pointing out the care of Christ for the Church—his flock. "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (See also Ezek. xxxiv.) And (2) that the Messiah, true to the covenant made with Abraham, will have regard for all the seed of Abraham, even *the lambs.* In this respect, the prophecy is a declaration that the house of Israel shall lose nothing in the Messianic day; but that the idea of the FAMILY, preserved so rigorously in Israel from the days of old, shall be the fundamental idea in the building of that kingdom which shall never decay. The prophet Malachi teaches the same thing of that day. When speaking of the forerunner of Christ, he says, in the name of Jehovah: "Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord, and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Mal. iv, 5, 6.) That cessation of family feuds is primarily referred to, as Keil and Henderson think, is no doubt true; but that involves all that we affirm—the preservation of the family as the base of Church and State in the Messiah's period.

The question, then, is, Did Christ, as the promised Messiah, fulfill this prophecy of himself, as he did other minute prophecies, such as being "dumb" before his murderers; making "his grave with the

rich in his death;" riding "into Jerusalem?" In John x, he declares himself to be the Good Shepherd, and we can not consider that discourse as having been suggested by his physical surroundings at the moment, and therefore as having but an *accidental* reference to Old Testament characteristics of the Messiah. The Coming One of the prophets is the Shepherd, who shall feed the flock of Jehovah. That Christ Jesus exhibited the character of a shepherd, and often spoke of himself as such; that, to be literal, he answered to the ideal of prophecy in respect to the children, is as much a fulfillment of prophecy in him as any other act recorded of him and pointed out by the finger of inspiration.

It is a fact that Jesus did fulfill the first particular prophecy quoted above from Isaiah. Did he also fulfill the second one? In Matt. xvii it is written: "In that hour came the disciples to Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And he called to him a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me; but whoso shall cause one of these little ones, which believe in me, to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck and that he should be sunk in the depths of the sea." (Comp. Mark x, Luke xviii.)

Underlying these words we perceive clearly Christ's

recognition and approval of the moral character of little children, and therefore their fitness for membership in the Church. The simple fact that he introduced a child as a model for his disciples, or as an illustration of his teaching, is sufficient proof of the proposition. Children, according to the explicit affirmation of Christ Jesus, possess that character, without which the disciples themselves can not enter the kingdom. If with this character the disciples can enter, shall the children, who have this character, be rejected? On what grounds? Whatever reasons may be manufactured through the exigencies of preconceived notions, or the requirements of a traditional theology, whose chief support may be in the authority of some great name, we are brought face to face with the fact emphasized by Christ himself, that this character is not to be obtained by adults, *except through a change in the moral quality or disposition of the mind.* We say "character," and not the particular virtue of humility, great as it is; for Christ said, "*Except ye turn* [στραφῆτε], and become as little children," etc., showing that it was the *nature* of children he had in mind. The humility he would have his disciples possess is not the result of a resolution, but the product of a character; not the politic reserve of a philosophical prudence, but the fragrant blossom of a guileless soul.

Again, Jesus identifies himself with the children: "Whoso receiveth one such little child in my name, receiveth me." The love of Christ for children was not a sentiment arising from the inborn love for the beautiful, which, in some degree, is common to us all;

nor was it an expression of his holy tenderness for the lowly and helpless. Jesus loved nature; all that was beautiful in it was reflected in the pure mirror of his soul, as his discourses abundantly prove, and it could not have been otherwise, as Beauty is of God. But profounder than all æsthetic feelings was the Lord Christ's recognition of the *child-soul*, and his perception of the moral quality of him who, in Christ's name, should "receive one such little child." Christ sees in him, like seeking like, and it is just such souls to whom Christ comes, whether they be Jew or Gentile, and by whom, without the expenditure of miracle, or the wisdom of words, he is the most gladly welcomed. The World's Redeemer is identified with the child as he is with a believing adult, with this difference; that, in the case of the adult, there is a consciousness of the union which is wanting to the child. Nevertheless, no child is Christless. While there may be no mystical union, there is a union which is preserved until, by voluntary act, as in the case of a believing adult, the child severs himself from Christ and breaks the bond.

It is "*such little child*"—that is, one just such as Christ held by him, one who had not yet blurred the purity of his childhood—with whom the oneness is affirmed. To reject such a one, is to reject the *result* of the work which Christ came to do; that is, to make men abandon the selfishness, the unbelief, and the carnality of a depraved spirit. To reject *this* is to reject the Spirit of Christ, whatever may be our intellectual acceptance of the Jesus of history. It may be objected to, that all this refers to those believing ones

who resemble little children. Supposing for the moment that to be the case, the argument still holds good; for whatever such believing ones have which makes them *like children,* the children themselves already possess. But the objection is not valid. Christ had said nothing about believing adults, he does not mention them until he finishes all he had to say concerning the children. At verse 6, the transition is made to the case of the disciples as is indicated by the particle δὲ and the addition of the words, "those believing in me." In Luke's account this is clearly seen. At verse 6, then, Jesus passes to his disciples, and not before, and from that particular application he proceeds to believers in general.

In Matt. xix, 13–15, is the record of another act fulfilling the prophecy quoted from Isaiah: "Then were brought unto him little children, that he should lay his hands upon them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer the little children and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands upon them and departed thence." This is the second time Christ asserted that children belong to the kingdom of heaven. Any doubts that may arise are dissipated by a single reading of the text; it is self-luminous. In Mark x, 13–16, the same event is narrated with additions (verses 15, 16), one of which is very important for the light it throws upon Matt. xviii, 3. There it is said, that unless the disciples become as little children, they shall not enter the kingdom. In Mark the application is general: "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of

God as a little child, shall not enter therein." Now, by combining these two accounts and that of Luke, we have the whole transaction before us. And observe:

First. Christ was greatly displeased. (Mark x, 14.) The word *ἀγαναχτέω* expresses the strongest indignation; at least it is much stronger than the English "displeased," and it shows that our Lord had grave reasons for resenting the act of the disciples, since we can hardly believe that the serenity of his mind would have been so profoundly disturbed, as the use of this word indicates, if the preventing of the children by the disciples did not vitally affect Christ's redemptive relation to them. In precise agreement with this important view, observe

Secondly. The tense of the verb *κωλύετε, forbid.* Had Christ intended his commandment, "forbid them not," to be understood as applying to that particular act of the disciples, he would have used a different tense and we would have instead of *μὴ κωλύετε*, (present imperative), the subjunctive *μὴ κωλύσητε*. That tense or form of the word would limit Christ's command to that specific time. But the *present μὴ κωλύετε is continuous in its application*, and is good for, is in force for, all ages and all peoples accepting his gospel.

In Isaiah it is said of the Coming One: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, *he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom.*" Without emphasizing the fact too much, one can not fail to be struck with the coincidence between this prediction and the narrative of Mark. His words are: "*He*

took them up in his arms." Dr. A. Clarke notes that one of the Itala versions reads, "*in sinu suo,*" *in his bosom.* His notes might have gone farther, since other versions read in a similar manner. The Ethiopic,* *et collocavit eos in sinu suo, and he gathered them in his bosom.* The Persian, *eos itaque in sinum suum suscepit, and when he had taken them in his bosom.* The Arabic has *Deinde amplexatus est eos, when he had embraced them.* The Vulgate, *et complexans eos,* and *embracing them.* The Syriac, however, reads, *tulisset eos super brachia sua, when he had taken them up in his arms.* There is no need for microscopical methods of exegesis, nor is the New Testament so obscure as to be in need of such to illustrate its simple story. Between the two modes of expression there is no material difference. But it may and will be said that such a little thing as taking children into his bosom is too small and incidental a matter to be considered as a fulfillment of such a sublime prophecy. The word of prophecy is full of small things. And the fact before us is not smaller than the prophecy of Zechariah relating to Christ's riding upon the foal of an ass; nor smaller than other minute predictions of the coming Messiah. It is not smaller than Christ's prophecy that the besiegers at the fall of Jerusalem would cast a trench about the devoted city—a fact which Titus was driven to accomplish by the unexpected turn of affairs.

The foregoing ought to be sufficient in proof that when our Lord said "*of such*" is the kingdom of

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* Brian Walton, Biblia Polyglotta, Cum Interpret. Latina.

heaven, he included the children. The necessities, however, of sectarian theology have thrown about these simple words a blinding mist. Accordingly the phrase "kingdom of heaven" does not mean the Church, if "*such*" refers to children, but the invisible kingdom of the saints on high. On the other hand, if that phrase means "the Church," and "such" refers to children, then "little children" must signify adults with child-like dispositions.

But consider the combined narrative:

(1) *The kingdom of heaven.* The formula, kingdom of heaven (*βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν*) is peculiar to Matthew.* In the other Gospels and in the Epistles we have "*the kingdom of God,*" or simply "the kingdom." From the Old Testament stand-point it is the prophetic designation of the Messianic state, the "Day of Jehovah" (יוֹם יְהוָה), the "Last Days" (אַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים); and when John the Baptist preached of the near approach of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. iii, 2), he signified thereby the fulfillment of the Messianic hope, or the incoming of the Messianic kingdom. (Von Colln, Biblische Theol., N. T., § 155.)

What this kingdom of God is, is nowhere expressed; for it was unnecessary to explain that which

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*Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah, Vol. I, 267, notes: "According to the Rabbinic views of the time, the terms 'kingdom,' 'kingdom of heaven,' and 'kingdom of God' (in the Targum on Micah iv, 7, 'kingdom of Jehovah'), were equivalent. In fact, the word 'heaven' was often used instead of 'God,' so as to avoid undue familiarizing of the ear with the sacred name. This probably accounts for the exclusive use of the expression, 'kingdom of heaven,' in the Gospel by St. Matthew."

was the hope of Israel from the beginning. As Weiss says,* the idea is regarded as one quite familiar to the people. In fact, no one in Israel, which was from the first to be a kingdom whose supreme Lord and King was Jehovah, could thereby understand anything else than a kingdom in which the will of God is fulfilled perfectly upon earth as by the angels in heaven." It is the realization of the theocratic ideal, the manifestation of the everlasting kingdom of the Son of David, which even in ancient prophetism had its roots in, and owed its origin to, the activities of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men, by which means also the Gentiles should come unto Zion.

There is another aspect of the kingdom, which is not another, only so far as it may serve to bring into relief the idea of the Church. For the Messianic Church is the Messianic kingdom, and the visible Church is, in the true conception of it, the outward form of that kingdom. Dr. Edersheim, whose extensive and minute knowledge of Jewish thought is entitled to the greatest respect, objects, with his usual learning, to this view. "It is difficult to conceive," says he, "how the idea of the identity of the kingdom of God with the Church could have originated. Such parables as those about the sower and about the net (St. Matt. xiii, 3–9; 47, 48), and such admonitions as those of Christ to his disciples in St. Matthew xix, 12; vi, 33; and vi, 10, are utterly inconsistent with it." (Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Vol. I, 126, n.)

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*Bib. Theol., N. T.; see also Köestlin, Das Wesen der Kirche, s. 29.

Passing over the alleged grounds for his objection, we may remark that the learned author himself can not avoid the force of the natural reasons which one would reach from a study of the Old Testament teachings of the kingdom and the founding, growth, and progress of the Church of Christ *in* the world which it is, but *of* which it is not. "The kingdom of God," he says, "or kingly rule of God, is an *objective fact*; the visible Church can only be the *subjective* attempt at its outward realization, of which the invisible Church is the true counterpart." This is all for which we would contend. We would never affirm that the "kingdom of heaven" is *identical* with the visible Church in every respect, time, and place, but only that the Church is the visible manifestation in time of that invisible kingdom. The aim and purpose of this Church, imperfect as it is, because of the material of which it is composed, is to represent in itself the ideal kingdom. With this concept there is no difficulty with the parables of the sower and the grain of mustard-seed. He who is truly a member of the Church is a naturalized citizen of the invisible kingdom; and he who belongs to that kingdom can not be denied the privileges pertaining to him in its outward or historical form. In the apostolic idea, so far as the kingdom can be historically realized, it is identical with the Church. Where Christ is, there is the Church; and where the Church is, there is the Christ. Whether it is so now or not, is not the question; it was so at the beginning. For as Delitzsch says: "The New Testament Scriptures know nothing of a visible and an invisible Church, which are related to each

other as a shell to the kernel, as a body to the soul; nor of a Church of the regenerate, and another of the unregenerate; it knows only of the one Church, and that is the one body which is related to Christ as its head, and is animated by his own Spirit."* His definition of the kingdom, and the relation to it of the Church, as given in his work, "Von Hause Gottes," is: "The kingdom of God is the rule of God in Christ; but the Church is a society of men within it, who are united with each other under Christ as their head."

In the teachings of Jesus and the New Testament writers the kingdom of God often coincides with the Church of Christ. In Acts i, 3, St. Luke says that during the forty days previous to the ascension, Jesus spoke to his disciples "the things concerning the kingdom of God"—that is, "whatever concerned the doctrine, discipline, and establishment of the Christian Church." (Dr. A. Clarke, Com., *in loc.*) "On all matters relating to the constitution of the Christian Church to be planted and established among the Gentiles." (Bloomfield, Greek Test.) "Speaking to them that which related to the Messiah's kingdom, which he would erect." (Meyer, Com.) "We must distinguish between 'speaking concerning the kingdom' and 'speaking concerning *the things* of the kingdom.' . . . It is plain, finally, from verse 6, that the word *βασιλεία, kingdom,* can not here denote the Christian religion, as Kuinoel supposes." (Olshausen, Com.)

* Vier Buecher von den Kirche; see Prof. Candlish, The Kingdom of God, pp. 195, 205, and Bannerman, The Scriptural Doct. of the Ch.

Now, whether or not the kingdom of God embraces the visible Church, and so far is the Church, or the Church is the kingdom, it is indubitable that, upon the express authority of the Ruler of that kingdom, children are members, subjects of it. This being true, they possess that moral fitness without which no one can enter or remain in that kingdom. If the kingdom is in no sense the Church, nevertheless children, because they belong to that kingdom, can not, on Scriptural grounds, be denied membership in the Church, which is less perfect in every sense than that kingdom, since it is ever striving to realize in itself the perfect excellency of that kingdom. Moral fitness through Christ is the only ground for Church membership on the part of the adult, and on that ground precisely, according to the teaching of Christ and his apostles, does the child stand.

To all this it may be said that children are not considered as being morally unfit by those who deny their right to Church membership, but since admission to the Christian Church is through baptism, and since Christ neither baptized those little children, nor left express commandment of child-baptism, he showed thereby that, while they may be subjects of the kingdom, he did not intend they should be members of the Church. Now, such an objection proceeds upon the assumption that in the thought of Christ the kingdom was wholly distinct from the Church; and since we have dwelt upon that long enough, it will be observed in direct reply to the objection: (1) That Christ did not baptize any adults; and (2) it must be remembered that Christian baptism was not yet in-

stituted. That sacred rite was not instituted until the unchangeable formula "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," without which it never can be given, was solemnly announced by the Lord Jesus among his last words on the day of his ascension. John's baptism, which was not a symbol of the new birth, which is the idea contained in the Christian formula, was in no way applicable to children from the stand-point of Christ. Nor would it be now, leaving for the moment the fact of Christian baptism out of view. According to our Lord's teaching children were already members of the kingdom, but John's baptism was a baptism unto repentance, the fundamental idea of it being that those receiving it were outside the kingdom which was come in the person of the Christ. It was a preparation on the part of those confessing their sins for the spiritual teaching and work of the coming Messiah.

(2) Having considered the phrase 'kingdom of heaven,' and the arguments arising from it, observe that in referring to children, Christ said "*of such*" is that kingdom composed. The Greek word τοιοῦτος, *such*, properly denotes the innate or essential *quality* of the thing to which it is applied. "Of such kind, nature, or quality" (Liddell and Scott); "Talis, hujusmodi" (Schrevelii); "Innuit qualitatem rei" (Schleusner); "Of this kind or sort" (Robinson N. T. Lex). Therefore, when Christ said "of such" is the kingdom, he could not have meant other than the children which were brought to him, and all children for all time; for it is only to those having just the *quality* which children possess the kingdom

belongs. The idea of similarity is swallowed up in the stronger notion of identity of kind or quality. This word is preceded by a word which introduces the reason why Christ was displeased, and why he commanded the disciples to permit the little ones to come to him. The particle γὰρ, *for*, in the New Testament, as in classic Greek, introduces the reason for what is said, done, or commanded. Christ was not indignant because those bringing the children would be disappointed, nor because the children themselves would be deprived of his immediate blessing. He gives no such reasons. His reason, and the only reason he gave, was, FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. The Jehovah Jesus knew his own.

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

THE purpose of the present chapter is to lay before the reader the Old Testament reasons, on the part of the Hebrew-Christians, for child-membership in the Apostolic Church. From this it must not be inferred that that fact depends upon the validity of any argument on the oneness of the Church in the Old and New Testaments. Nothing could be further from the truth. Whether children were members of the Church in the Apostolic Age or not, is wholly a matter of history. But the completeness of the evidence demands that the groundwork should be as broad as possible. Moreover, and what is of greater import, when all the facts bearing upon the case are brought clearly before us, the conclusion forces itself upon us in such a way as to leave no room for rational doubt.

By the unity of the Church under the Hebrew and Christian dispensations is meant, that they both possessed the same head, the same spiritual laws, the same promises, the same Redeemer, the same operations of the Holy Ghost, the same gospel in essence, and were organized and preserved for the same divine purpose of the ages. The Church began its formal existence before Israel became a nation. If, then, we

strip the Church of the Old Testament of its political wrappings, sever it, as we easily may, from its relations with the State—since affiliations and political connections formed nothing essential to its integrity—there will be presented to us, in embryo, the Church of the New Testament. Whatever we find in that Church, the same may be seen in the Church of the patriarchs. Nothing has been, or can be, added to what constituted the Church at Pentecost. And nothing is in that Church which is not a development of everything essential to human salvation in the ancient commonwealth of Israel. The same law of development which has operated in the physical world and in human history, and illustrates itself in the physical and mental growth of the individual, obtains here also. The Christian Church is not a creation, but a development, a continuation under more vitalizing influences, of the Church originally founded in the family of Abraham. This unity is not that of a work of art, such as a piece of sculpture, which is, in a sense, mechanical, and may be wholly destroyed by time and the action of the elements. It is the unity of a living body, which is animated in every part by the same soul, and warmed and nourished by the same blood.

Now this unity of the Church may be shown (1) by the name which both organizations bear in the Word of God; (2) from the nature of the Abrahamic covenant; (3) from prophecy; (4) from the teachings of Christ and his apostles.

I. *The name.* In the Old Testament we find such terms as "the house of Abraham," or of

"Israel," denoting those who followed in the steps of the great patriarch, the father of the faithful. We also find the terms "sanctuary of the Lord," "the congregation of Israel," or of the Lord, and the "assembly of the people of Israel," or of the Lord. But, omitting a study of the terms "house of Abraham" and "house of God," which would repay careful consideration, we fix upon two principal terms, which constantly occur throughout the Old Testament—עֵדָת, *Edah*, and קָהָל, *Kahal*. In whatever Books of the Old Testament we turn to, we find that all meetings of the children of Israel, for any purpose whatsoever, whether of a religious or a political nature, are referred to under these important words.

Gesenius defines עֵדָת, *Edah*, as an "*appointed meeting, assembly*. Spec., *Assembly, congregation*, community of the Israelites. . . . (1) *The congregations of Jehovah;* (2) a domestic or private *company, family, household.*"

Fürst defines it in a similar manner, as (*a*) "*an assembly, association, congregation;* (*b*) *an assembly of people;* (*c*) *a congregation;* in a narrower sense, *an association, a union, an assembly;* (*d*) *of a household family;* that is, all that belongs to a house in the widest sense of it. (Job xv, 34; xvi, 7.)"

Davidson, also: (1) "*An assembly* or *meeting;* (2) *a company*, or *group*, a family."

This word resembles *Kahal* in meaning, yet between them there is a wide and important difference.

קָהָל, *Kahal*, signifies, according to Davidson, (1) *a calling* together, or *being convoked;* (2) a convocation, assembly, a multitude or crowd.

Gesenius: (1) "*A coming together,* a convocation of the people; (2) an assembly, *congregation, convocation.*"

Fürst defines *Kahal*: "(1) A *festive convocation,* an *assembly* or *convocation of the people* for sacred objects—עֵדָה, *the Edah;* hence applied to the whole congregation of Israel; generally an assembly with the adjective גָּדוֹל, *Great.*

Köstlin (Schaff's Herzog, Art. Church) defines *Edah* as an assembly in general; and *Kahal* as an assembly for divine worship.

By a comparison of the two terms a distinct difference, and at the same time a certain similarity will be seen. *Edah* is an assembly, as is also *Kahal;* but the difference lies in this,—that the first signifies a gathering of people at a *regularly appointed* meeting; not necessarily all the people, although a collection of the whole would constitute an *Edah,* but a part only. It is related to *Kahal* as a particular congregation or society is to the whole Church or organization of which it forms a part. *Kahal* can never be applied to such a fractional division of a Church or nation. It signifies *the whole people* united by definite laws and purposes, and thus forming a grand unit. So Vitringa (De Synagoge Vetere, p. 80): "The term קָהָל, *Kahal,* is used in a narrower, more restricted sense than the term עֵדָה, *Edah. Kahal* denotes strictly *the whole of any multitude of people* united in the bonds of one society, and constituting some kind of republic or city; while the term עֵדָה, *Edah,* signifies simply any gathering or assembly of men, whether it be great or small, but especially one which is fixed and appointed," *imprimis tamen condictum statumque.*

It is dissimilar in its meaning from *Edah*, in that it signifies the *convocated* or *called out*, which meaning *Edah* does not have. Hence we are not surprised that *Edah* never occurs in Genesis, while *Kahal* is found there four times. In three of these it is used in connection with Abraham, in whose family, as remarked above, the Church, the *called out*, began its formal existence. (See Isa. li, 1; xlix, 8.)

The Septuagint, or Greek Version of the Old Testament, translated 286 or 285 B. C., has been generally received by Jews and Christians as a faithful rendering of the Hebrew original. It was used in the synagogues, and is more frequently quoted by the New Testament writers than the Hebrew itself. In this ancient version, which our Lord and his apostles often quoted, the same distinction in the employment of words is adhered to in rendering *Edah* and *Kahal*. The former occurs in the Canonical Books of the Hebrew Old Testament, about one hundred and forty-one times. The Seventy (Septuagint) have translated it about one hundred and thirty-one times by the term *συναγωγή, synagogue*, but never by the word *Ἐκκλησία, Ecclesia*. *Kahal* occurs in the same books eighty-two times, and the translators have rendered it seventy-two times by the word *Ἐκκλησία, Ecclesia* (Church). It is evident, then, that the Greek term *Ecclesia* correctly and fully expressed the Hebrew idea in the word *Kahal*.* Every convocation or as-

* "Satius tamen fuisset, ut opinor, si το קהל semper reddidissent per ἐκκλησία, quid hæc notio formata videtur in Lingua Græca ad clare exprimendum Hebræum קהל." (De Synag., p. 84.)

sembly is an *Edah,* and may be so spoken of, the true import of the term being understood, but it can not by itself indicate the whole people. But, as Vitringa observes, this is just what *Kahal* always and everywhere signifies.* It was to the *Kahal* of Israel, "all the congregation of Israel," that the command came to inaugurate the Passover. (Ex. xii, 3–6.) In Leviticus iv, 13, it is the whole congregation, the *Kahal,* which if it shall err, that shall offer a young bullock for a sin-offering; for a glance will show that the phrase כָּל עֲדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, *the whole Edah of Israel,* is equivalent to הַקָּהָל, *the Kahal,* which occurs in the same verse, and in verse 14, and also in verse 21, where it is said that the bullock is the sin-offering for the assembly (הַקָּהָל). In chapter xvi, 17, it is for the whole Assembly (כָּל-קָהָל) of Israel, the Kahal, the Church, that Aaron shall make atonement. See also Num. x, 7; xiv, 5; xv, 15; xvi, 3.

We have seen that the LXX have translated this word *Kahal* by *Ἐκκλησία, Ecclesia,* a word derived from *ἐκκαλεῖν, to call out, to summon an assembly.* Now this same word Christ and his apostles employed to designate the idea of the Christian Church. It is found one hundred and fourteen times in the New Testament, and in every case, except one or two, it denotes the whole of the Christians in one place (a part of which may be an Edah or synagogue) or, as in numerous instances, the universal Church of Christ. Acts v, 11: "And great fear came upon the whole Church [*ἐκκλησία*];" Acts viii, 3: "Saul laid waste

* Sed vocabulum קהל semper et ubicumque, nisi fallor, designat universum populi civitatem. P. 83.

the Church [ἐκκλησία];" "Unto the Church [ἐκκλησία] of God which is at Corinth" (1 Cor. i, 2); on which Meyer remarks: "Compare קְהַל יְהוָה (Num. xvi, 3; xx, 4.) The expression is with Paul the standing theocratic designation of the Christian community in which the theocratic idea of the Old Testament קהל, *Kahal*, presents itself as realized; it is the πλήρωσις, *fullness*, of this קהל, *Kahal*."

As far, then, as the name is concerned, the Churches of the Old Testament and of the New are identical. Both are called by the same terms of endearment in addition to their technical designations. In Isaiah lx, 5; Jeremiah xxxii, 2, the Church of the Old Testament is called "*his bride*." In Revelation xix, 7, this is declared of the Church of the New Testament. The Lord is wedded to both, they both are the one "bride." The Church of the Old Testament is called in the New, Christ's "*own house*." (Heb. iii, 1–6.) It was the "Church in the wilderness," and in both Testaments the Lord calls the members of his Church "his people," "his chosen people."

But to found the unity of both Churches on the signification of mere words would be to trifle with so grave a theme. Our purpose is far otherwise. It is the identity of thought underlying both terms, and not their etymology upon which emphasis is laid. This has been shown above in the tender language of God concerning both Churches. To the pious Israelite the Hebrew terms *Kahal* and *Edah* (*synagogue*) signified something more than a collective unity of the children of Israel. They meant to him that the Israelitish community as a chosen people had its existence apart

from other nations for a holy purpose, and that it was originally designed for a special end in the economy of redemption. Thus Cremer notes (Biblico-Theolog. Lex., second German Ed.): "The use of these words, therefore, was determined by something else than the mere thought of *national* unity, and it is self-evident that the underlying thought is the function of the people in the plan of salvation. . . . The same thought lies at the root of the word as used by Christ, so far as it was suggested by the Old Testament. . . . When Christ says, 'I will build my Church,' we are scarcely reminded that *ἐκκλησία* denoted in profane Greek the place of assembly as well as the Assembly, but rather that the Old Testament community was the *house* of Israel. Accordingly *ἐκκλησία, ecclesia,* denotes the New Testament community of the redeemed in its twofold aspect. (1) The entire congregation of all who are called by and to Christ, who are in the fellowship of his salvation—in the Church. (2) The New Testament Churches as confined to particular places."

II. *The nature of the Abrahamic Covenant.* The first formal organization of a kingdom of God on earth is revealed to us in the family of Abraham. We see that family chosen out of the world, separated to the worship of the true God, and related to him by bonds of faith and gracious promises made by him to them. God revealed himself to Abraham, not merely by the inner voice, as when the command came to leave Chaldea and begin the nomadic life in Palestine, but in a personal manifestation, a theophany, the first since Jehovah revealed himself to Adam in Par-

adise. In this revelation to Abraham was contained, as the Apostle Paul teaches, the principles of the gospel; and our Lord himself said: "Abraham saw his day, and was glad." The whole tenor of the Divine address to this remarkable man shows that his family was to be a repository and witness and teacher of the revelation given. We further see that the truths made known were accepted by faith, and all subsequent history of Abraham's posterity proves that faith in the promises was a distinguishing element in the religion of Israel. Further, Abraham stands before Jehovah, and receives these promises, and enters into covenant relation with him, not as an individual only, but as the representative of a class who shall be as the sand by the sea-shore or the stars of heaven for multitude. He is *Abraham*, the father of many nations. "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Gen. xxii.) The covenant which God made with Abraham is recorded in Genesis xvii, 1–14. This covenant, like, in general, all the promises of God, has a twofold aspect—one relating to his providential care over those obeying his precepts, and the other bearing directly upon the spiritual blessing, of which the lower aspect is but the type.

In the change of Abraham's name he is constituted the Father of Multitudes. History has demonstrated that these can not be world-kingdoms; and Scripture teaches that they are all those of all nations who, through faith in the world's Redeemer, become the spiritual seed or children of the Patriarch. "For the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the

heathen by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations [τὰ ἔθνη] be blessed." (Gal. iii, 8.) The family of Abraham thus became the Church, having a definite belief, a definite object of worship, a definite ordinance, obligatory on all becoming members, and a distinct purpose in its mission in the world.

But this covenant of grace is the same by which all believers in Christ become heirs of the promise; for, as the Apostle in the Epistle to the Galatians teaches, "the blessing of Abraham has come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus" (chap. iii, 14). Now this could not be if the covenant was different from the gospel announced by Christ and the Apostles. Paul distinctly declares that God preached the gospel to Abraham; and this being true, there can be no difference in fact between the New Testament Church and the Church founded by Jehovah in the family of Abraham. Just what the precise, exact thought of the Apostle was, one may not be able to express otherwise than in general terms. But this we do know, that God revealed himself to Abraham as *El Shaddai*, the All-sufficient, Powerful God; that immediately after revealing his character and his attitude towards Abraham, and in him toward the world, showing a desire to enter into fellowship with man, he commands the Patriarch to be "perfect," and then follows the promise of an everlasting and universal blessing. So that in this record there is wrapped up the germ of the wonderful truths brought to completion in the appearance and work of Christ, the Promised Seed. If there is an essential difference between the Abra-

hamic Church and the Church of the New Testament, it is extremely difficult to understand the Apostle's reasoning when he says, "They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" (Gal. iii, 7), and "by faith Abraham became the father of all them that believe" (Rom. iv, 11); since between the two—the Church of Abraham and the Church of Christ—there is a wide gulf. Nor can we see anything in the strong and luminous proposition, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." (Gal. iii, 29.) The fact is, if the two Churches are different it must be admitted, with reverence, that the Apostle's reasoning is wholly inconsequential. There is no way by which we can see the logical connection between the two ideas. But on the ground of unity of the Churches the argument of the Apostle is grand and self-evident.

Abraham entered into this covenant with God through *faith*. "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness." (Gal. iii, 6.) But faith is the essential element in the Christian Church. Without it, there is no Christianity. It involves the idea of grace as opposed to the idea of law and works. Its object is Christ, through whom, by virtue of the atonement, the grace comes. Then, again, the object of Abraham's faith was Christ, for Christ himself says, "Abraham saw my day, and was glad." No one can enter the Church of Christ without faith, and therefore can not be counted as the seed of Abraham. But why not, if the Church of the Patriarch and the Church in New Testament dispensation are different? And on the contrary, how is it

that "they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham," and "they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham?"

This covenant was an everlasting covenant. It was not made to be broken. The gifts of God are without repentance. The nature of the promise contained in the covenant demonstrates its perpetuity. The words of the Lord in the record are sufficient proof; but since much discussion has arisen concerning the meaning of the term "everlasting," the question may be otherwise laid to rest by recalling the apostolic argument in Galatians iii. An examination of that argument will show that it rests, for its validity, upon the perpetuity of the covenant. If this is not what the Apostle is asserting, we shall look in vain for the reason why the Apostle affirms the inability of the Sinaitic law to abrogate that covenant, or why he should refer to the annulling of the covenant at all. He says: "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men. Though it be but a man's covenant, yet, if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, That the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." Our God never violated a pledge. He confirmed the covenant with an oath, and it remains to this day. The first promise was made in Eden; the promise to Abraham was a reaffirmation of that, and the beginning

of the historical process for its fulfillment. It was the first stage in the unfolding of the Divine plan, the first day in the genesis of the new creation. The law was "added because of transgression till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." (Gal. iii, 19.) From the giving of this law on Sinai, going backward to the covenant with Abraham (Gen. xii), is exactly four hundred and thirty years, and therefore it is the Abrahamic Covenant, which could not be annulled by the law.

The Church of God, founded in the family of Abraham, was never destroyed. Through all the checkered ages of Israel's history it persisted until, surviving all changes, social, political, and religious, it finally shone out in the Messianic glory of the New Testament period. After the death of Abraham, the promise is conserved in Isaac and Jacob, who walked in the steps of their fathers. (Rom. iv, 12.) In the furnace of Egypt, the chosen is watched over till the hour of deliverance. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." (Hosea xi, 1.) At the giving of the law, the idea of Divine selection is emphasized, and the spiritual purpose of that selection: "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine, and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." From the giving of the law the national consciousness is, that it is called to political existence for a religious purpose, and so strongly was this idea developed in Israel, that it seems as if the whole nation constituted the Church of God. But "all are not Israel which are of Israel, neither because they

are Abraham's seed are they all children." Nevertheless, within the political nation was the spiritual Israel. In the wilderness, while obeying Jehovah, they were the "Church" (Acts vii, 38), and they all drank of the spiritual Rock, which was Christ. (1 Cor. x, 4.) In these affirmations of Stephen and Paul is involved the fact that they exercised faith, the religious characteristics of their father Abraham, and the distinguishing trait of every true child of Abraham. Faith is found everywhere in the Old Testament. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, after defining faith, says that "by faith the elders obtained a good report;" that the men of God "all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." The list is carried up through all the stages of Israel's history, and not only are the rulers and heroes of Israel mentioned as being men of faith, whereby the Church might seem to be limited to a few individuals scattered through long periods, and therefore destroying the idea of the perpetuity of the Church established in Abraham's family, but faith is affirmed of the common people (vs. 35–38) who were loyal to God. "And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, *that they, without us, should not be made perfect.*" The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is a complete demonstration of the perpetuity of the Church.

When national apostasy manifests itself, God raises up the prophets, who appeal to the true Israel and

keep alive the flickering flame of personal *righteousness by faith.* (Isa. vii, 9; xxx, 15; comp. viii, 17; Jer. xviii, 5; Hab. ii, 4.) "The just shall live by his faith." The Psalms are not simply the outbursts of individual piety; they are the reflection of the experience of God's people, the concentrated voice of the spiritual Israel. At times this true Israel is in a hopeless minority, as in the days of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Elijah, when it was reduced to a mere "remnant;" but in the darkest periods there were those who had not bowed the knee to Baal. To human eye the Church of God is extinct, but to the eye of Jehovah it is a seed in the winter field, waiting the coming of spring.

The perpetuity of this Church may also be shown from prophecy. The prophets were all members of the household of faith. Instead of prophesying the overthrow of that Church, they all affirm its spiritual nature and its everlasting continuance, emphasizing the inner life more than the external, the spiritual rather than the ritual. The Church of the future is always depicted as a continuation of the Church *then* existing. Zion is to be enlarged; she will embrace all nations; but it is the Zion *then existing.* The sublime prophecies of Isaiah xliii, 1–7; xiv, 1–5; xlix, 18–23; li, 2–6; lii, 9, 10, and the various prophecies in Jeremiah and the minor prophets, might be quoted in proof, but a full exposition of them would require a volume. The latter portion of Isaiah's prophecies, however, should be constantly borne in mind, since it bears so directly upon this particular thought. "Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a

woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. . . . Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been? Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." (Isaiah xlix, 14–22.) In chapter liv he again prophesies of the then existing Zion: "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles." Some few passages in the prophecies have been interpreted in op-

position to our position; such as Daniel ii, 44, and Amos ix, 11. But those who employ these Scriptures in the manner indicated, read into them what they force out of them. When the prophet says that "in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," it is purely arbitrary to suppose that that kingdom will have laws different, and subjects different, from the real kingdom which was never to be destroyed. The kingdom to be set up is put in contrast to the world kingdoms, and not to the spiritual kingdom of God already existing; and, though destined to eclipse, yet also destined to universal sway. In Amos ix, 11, it is said: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in days of old." This prophecy, and that above quoted from Daniel, doubtless refer to the same event. In Acts xv, 14–16, James applies this prophecy of Amos to the upbuilding of the New Testament Church: "Simeon had declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build the ruins thereof, and I will set it up." It is evident, then, that the apostles did not consider these Scriptures as declaring a totally different Church, tabernacle, or kingdom, from that which had fallen, for that which had fallen is that which is again set up.

When we enter the New Testament, Judaism is presented to us as we have often seen it in the Old

Testament. While outwardly the chosen of God, it has in reality lost the element of spirituality characteristic of the house of Jacob. It is no longer the bride of the Lord, but a secular power striving intensely for political existence by unrighteous methods, and therefore on the low level of other world powers. It has the law, but that has become a mere mechanical system, a battle-ground for contending schools lacking the principle of spiritual life. It has a temple, but no shekinah; sacrifices, but no repentance. The whole nation seems forsaken of God, sunk in national apostasy, reviving now and then in some short-lived paroxysm of conscience.

But as in other days of Israel's degeneracy, there is within this outward politico-ecclesiasticism a true spiritual Israel which looked for the fulfillment of ancient promises. The *Magnificat* of Mary, as recorded by Luke, gives utterance to this faith: "He hath holpen his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed for ever." In the song of Zacharias the same belief asserts itself and particularly the important fact that God still had a people who were called his own, and therefore constituted his Church. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which

he sware to our father Abraham." Afterwards at the presentation in the temple, Simeon bears unconscious testimony to the same fact. "And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel." There were many others in Jerusalem looking for the same hope from the same spiritual stand-point: "And there was one Anna, a prophetess, . . . which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him *to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.*"

Omitting the proof from the events of Pentecost, as recorded in the Acts, and the testimony of Stephen, the Pauline Epistles may be cited as containing in fullest measure the teaching of inspiration. In Rom. ix, Paul says: "I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew. Note ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how that he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thy altars, and I am left alone and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal; even so, then, at this present time, also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." But what is this "remnant" other than the true Israel, which is itself a continuation of the Israel of God running back to Abraham?

If more argument were needed, the Apostle furnishes abundant proof in the succeeding verses of the same chapter. Having doubtless in mind the words of Jeremiah concerning Israel, "The Lord called thy name a green olive-tree" (chapter xi, 16); and of Hosea (chapter xiv, 6), "His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree;" the Apostle sets forth the Church of the Israelites as an olive-tree, the "natural branches" of which are the unbelieving Jews. These branches are "broken off," and the believing Gentiles are "grafted" into it, into which God is also able, he says, to graft the unbelieving Jews who are broken off. The Church of Christ, then, must be one with the Church of the Old Testament, which is the "good olive-tree," the Jew's "own olive-tree" in the apostle's argument.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians the same doctrine is taught: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now, in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross,

having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. *Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.*"

Such, in briefest outline, are the various proofs for the unity of the Church of God under the two dispensations. To deny this unity is to affirm that the patriarchs, the prophets, the priests, holy kings, and servants of God in all centuries of Jewish history were aliens to the true Israel, the Church of God and of his Anointed, and knew nothing of saving faith in the coming Redeemer. This, however, is contradicted by the Apostle, who founds the Church of Christ upon the Apostles *and* prophets, both united or held together in unity by Jesus Christ, the chief corner-stone.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE POSITION OF CHILDREN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT CHURCH.

IN no other sacred books of the world's religions, and therefore in no other religion than that of the Bible, is there such prominence given to childhood as is given in the Holy Scriptures. In the earliest of these Books, as if laying the foundation of the secular and spiritual prosperity of the Hebrew race, special regard is had for children, and precepts are laid down which govern their whole period from the day of birth till they become the "sons of the covenant."

In Genesis i, 28, and thence onward to the closing verses of Malachi, the possession of children is considered a blessing from Jehovah. The first mother uttered that belief (Gen. iv, 1): "I have gotten a man from the Lord." It is God who appointed her in Seth "another seed instead of Abel" (iv, 25). He who will bless Sara is God. (Gen. xvii, 16.) It is God who makes a mother fruitful or barren (xxix, 31; xxx, 2); for the reason that childlessness is regarded as the worst calamity to a house; unfruitfulness is dishonorable to a woman (Gen. xxx, 23), and is looked upon as a token, in some measure, of the Divine anger (xvi, 2). Hence the practices of heathenism toward children are condemned by the letter and spirit of all Hebraic laws concerning children.

The first thing of religious importance to the child was his reception of the rite of circumcision. Circumcision was the divinely established sign or token of the Abrahamic Covenant. While this rite may have been practiced by other peoples prior to, or contemporaneously with, its use among the Israelites, its first appearance in the Old Testament is in connection with the revelation of God to Abraham in all the majesty of power and holiness. "The Lord appeared to Abraham, and said unto him, I am God Almighty [*El-Shaddai*]; walk before me and be thou perfect, and I will make my covenant between me and thee." (Gen. xvii, 1, 2.) In the succeeding verses the promises follow, and then is established, or instituted, the token of the covenant made. "This is my covenant which ye shall keep, between me and thee, and thy seed after thee. Every man-child among you shall be circumcised. . . . It shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. . . . My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." (Gen. xvii, 10–14.)

It is sometimes affirmed that this rite was the seal of a national, a temporal covenant, and not of a covenant of grace. If that were true the grace covenant made with Abraham would have no outward sign. But again, the objection is nullified by the facts of sacred history. Ishmael and his sons were circumcised, but neither he nor they obtained an inheritance in the Promised Land. Esau and his children re-

ceived the seal also, but they inherited no portion of Canaan. If, now, these descendants of Abraham received the sign of the covenant, which was wholly temporal in its nature, and therefore guaranteed to those entering it temporal possessions, how shall their exclusion from its blessings and the failure of the guarantee in this case be explained? By such inquiries as these, which may be multiplied, the fact is made very clear that, while the covenant secured national blessings, it was primarily and essentially spiritual in its design. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches this (xi, 13–16), and especially in the statement (vs. 9, 10) that the land of Canaan was not the sole hope of the patriarchs, since they "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

The religious import of circumcision is seen in that it was *the ordinance of admission to the household of faith.** It was "the covenant in the flesh for an everlasting covenant" (Gen. xvii, 12), and must be performed on every male child born in the house or bought with money. (Vs. 13.) If it was neglected in the case of any child, he could not be numbered with the people of God, since he formed no part of the family with whom the covenant was made; "that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken

* "Die Beschneidung ist in Israel die Weihe des Menschen zum Eintritt in das heilige Volk Jehove's. An dem Gliede, worauf die Lebensfortpflanzung ruht und welchem heilige Ehrfurcht gezollt ward, wird diese blutige Reinigung vollzogen, zum Zeichen, dass die Fortpflanzung des ganzen Volks Gott geweiht werde." (Alttestament. Theol., 177; Dr. Herman Schultz, fourth Ed.)

my covenant." (Vs. 14.) To be cut off from his people signified absolute exclusion from the congregation, or Church of Israel, and all the blessings and privileges, spiritual and temporal, attached to or implied therein. (Ex. xii, 15; xxx, 33, 38; Lev. vii, 20. 21, 25, 27; xvii, 4, 9; xix, 8; Num. xv, 30; xix, 13.) In all probability this modified view of excision is wholly wrong, and there are not a few, of the highest scholarship, who regard this excision as penal in the extreme. Thus Oehler: "The *punishment of death* is attached, apparently, to a large number of crimes. It is prescribed, not only for the crime of murder, maltreatment of parents, man-stealing (Ex. xxi, 12), adultery, incest, and other unnatural crimes, . . . but for overstepping certain fundamental ordinances of the theocracy—the law of circumcision (Gen. xvii, 14), the law of the passover (Ex. xii, 15, 19.)" (Old Test. Theol., p. 223.) The supposition, then, that one *was born into* the Israelitish Church is without valid grounds. The child was born into the nation, but since, *in idea,* the Church and State were one, he could not remain a citizen of the nation without becoming, at least outwardly in the flesh, a member of the Church. Nor, to carry out the thought, could he become a member of the invisible, spiritual Israel, without being circumcised in heart, of which the fleshly circumcision was the sign.

Hence, *circumcision was the symbol of the renewal and purification of the heart.* This is seen in the phrase *uncircumcision of heart* frequently met with, and in the reiterated exhortations: "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart" (Deut. x, 16), "and

the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." (Deut. x, 16.)

Circumcision being an outward sign of inward holiness, it was at the same time the *seal* of the righteousness of faith. (Rom. iv, 11–25.) The object of that faith was the gospel, which had been preached to Abraham. That gospel spoke of a Redeemer to come, of the spiritual blessings coming upon the infant seed thereby, and of the child's personal active interest in those blessings. Every male child carried in his flesh the sign of God's promises, and of the obedience which he owed to his God as a condition of receiving the blessings. It also reminded him that nature was impure, and could not beget its own redeemer, nor purify itself. True this rite was imposed upon an unconscious babe, who knew nothing of the obligations placed upon him. This same objection is made against infant baptism. But to such crudities no answer need be given. Besides the fact that they are a criticism upon the commandment and wisdom of the All-wise God, they are the immediate product of a state of mind, which, because of its essentially anarchic quality, is a menace to the well-being of society. It should be understood, once for all, that no one has the right to do wrong. And while the parent has no right to obligate his child to do a wrong thing, it is both his right and his duty to obligate him to do what is right, because it is right that the child should do what is right.

This holy rite of circumcision the child received on the eighth day after birth. During the perform-

ance he formally received his name (Luke i, 59; comp. Gen. xvii, 5 ff., with xxi, 3 f.), so that the first utterance of his name was mingled with the accents of prayer in a solemn rite ordained of God. Then the God of Israel was pledged to be a God to the child forever, and the child was pledged to obedience and a holy life. (Gen. xvii, 1.) When he was one month old he was brought, if a first-born, to the sanctuary and there redeemed—since all the first-born belonged to God in a particular sense—by the payment of five shekels of the sanctuary. His presentation and redemption were vicarious for all the other children born in the family, as the Levite tribe was a perpetual vicarious offering for all the first-born of Israel. In this act of presentation the child was offered as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. In that act it was also set forth that he was indebted to God for his life and all its blessings; and, finally, that he was God's property.

As soon as the Hebrew boy was able to speak, he was taught verses of Holy Scripture and short prayers.* But it was not until the fifth or sixth year that formal instruction began. In the statutes for the government of the Hebrew people, Moses commands, "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life:

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* Paul the Apostle reminds Timothy "that from a child [*brephos*, infant] thou hast known the Holy Scriptures." (2 Tim. iii, 5.) Josephus says that "their [the Jews'] children learn their laws from the first dawnings of sense and reason in them."

but thou shalt teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons." In the succeeding verse he calls to mind why God gathered the people at Horeb—"That they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, *and that they may teach their children.*" (Deut. iv, 9, 10.) So important was the position of childhood in the Old Testament Church that this commandment concerning religious instruction is again emphasized with particular additions, in Deut. vi, 6–9: "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."

The Divine solicitude for the religious culture of the Hebrew child can only be faintly apprehended in any Version. The original of "diligently" signifies to repeat a thing again and again continuously until one has permanently learned it and understood its purport. But this was not enough. Religion must be in the home, where the children grow, absorb, and receive their earliest and most lasting impressions. Hence the statutes of the Lord were to be topics of conversation, so that their spiritual and temporal meanings might be simplified, brought down to the comprehension of the child's understanding, and thereby enter into the fiber of his soul at the earliest dawning of reason: "*Thou shalt talk of them when*

thou sittest in thine house." Morning and evening the child would hear the Word of God and its explanations in the prayers and religious rites of the household. On the hand and forehead of his father he would see the holy words. When he went out or came in he would see the statutes of Jehovah written on the door-posts of his house; and all this that he might know and ever remember the words of the Lord, consider himself holy unto God, and transmit to his children what he had received from his father.

At five years of age the Hebrew child began the study of the Bible, commencing with Leviticus, which contained the ordinances concerning sacrifices. From this, advance was made to the prophets, and finally to the Hagiographa. Every seven years the Law was publicly read at the Feast of Tabernacles (Deut. xxxi), at which the little children were to be present. Whether this statute became a dead-letter or not, and was only once observed in a space of five hundred years, as some think, matters little. Whatever may have been the facts in the case, we see clearly the command of God, and that *little children* were to be present at the ceremony. The Book of Proverbs is replete with precepts concerning the religious instruction of children. Warnings are given to parents to lay the foundation of a religious life at the beginning of the child's days: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The instinctive outgoings of his nature are to be watched, "whether his nature be pure and whether it be right" (xx, 1), and to all instruction in the Divine wisdom he must give an attentive ear, for

a knowledge of that is an experience of the fear of the Lord.

At twelve or thirteen years of age the boy became "a son of the commandment," or of "the Law." He was now for the first time subject to the whole Law, must observe all its ordinances, and therefore took part in all the solemn services of the sanctuary or temple. It was an eventful day to him and to the family when he entered the courts of the God of Jacob. As one of the people of God, he took part in all the sacred festivals, in the holy convocations, and pilgrimage feasts. For the first time he now assisted at the Passover, and partook of the paschal lamb, the meaning of which he had been taught years previously. (Ex. xii, 26, 27.) Dr. Gill, a Baptist and eminent Rabbinic scholar, observes in his notes on Luke ii, 42: "According to the maxims of the Jews, persons were not obliged to the duties of the law, or subject to the penalties of it in case of non-performance, until they were: A female, at the age of twelve years and one day; and a male, at the age of thirteen years and one day. They were not reckoned adult Church members till then; nor then, either, unless worthy persons; for so it is said: 'He that is worthy is called, at thirteen years of age, a son of the congregation of Israel;' that is, a member of the Church." Bloomfield (Critical Digest, Luke ii, 42) says: "The custom was not to take them [children] to the Passover, until they should have attained the years of puberty, a period which the Rabbins tell us was fixed at the twelfth year, when they were held amenable to the law, and were called Sons of Precept. Then were they also introduced

into the Church, initiated into its doctrines and ceremonies, and consequently were taken by their relations to Jerusalem at the festivals." In Poole's Synop. Crit. (Ex. xii, 26): "Children, at the age of twelve years, were brought by their parents to the temple; and from that time they began to eat of the Passover and other sacrifices." Rosenmüller and Kuinoel and other critics, English and foreign, have similar notes. Josephus, in the "Antiquities," says: "The law forbids the son to eat of the sacrifice before he has come to the temple." (Book IV, chap. xvi, sec. 30.)

Thus we see the care for childhood in the Old Testament, and the relation which children sustained to the Church. From the beginning they were consecrated to God, nurtured in his holy law, regarded as members of the household of faith, and prepared for public and personal acceptance of the obligations laid upon them in circumcision. Having arrived at the proper age when they could discern, in some degree, the profound symbolisms of religion, they became responsible, full members of the Church of God. Their probation was over; they could now enter the courts of the Lord with gladness, offer sacrifice, eat the Passover, chant with their parents and friends gathered at the feasts the glorious Hallel Psalms, and rejoice in the Coming One, the Messiah of Israel.

CHAPTER IX.

CHILDREN IN THE CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE MOTHER CHURCH AT JERUSALEM.

IN previous chapters we have shown the condition of childhood in the Roman Empire when Christianity began its beneficent career. The careful student will recall the faithful picture there given, in order to pursue an intelligent study of the same subject in the writings of the New Testament. It is a prime canon in historical criticism applied, that he only who is imbued with the literary, social, philosophical, and religious spirit of an age, can understand that age. He only, therefore, who can project himself into the *life* of the New Testament period, and can live, think, and act in turn in Jerusalem, in Ephesus, in Antioch, and in the Imperial Capital, can hope to understand sympathetically the full significance of much that is historical in the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline Epistles, concerning the early struggles of the Church with Paganism, Judaism, and the pervasive spirit of Orientalism.

Brought by the historic spirit into *rapport* with New Testament times, we may ask, without servility to preconceived judgments, what was the effect of the degraded ideas relative to childhood in heathenism upon Apostolic teaching and Church practice concern-

ing children? Knowing the character of Christianity from the teachings of Christ Jesus, have we not a presumptive right to investigate the New Testament records with the expectancy of there finding statements indicating something more than heathen interest in the ethical and religious welfare of children? Heathenism, it will be remembered, valued the child for what he might become; Christianity considered him for what he was. Further, it has been shown that the Church in the age immediately after the Apostles manifested especial interest in children, and that finally Christian teaching modified the Imperial laws concerning them. The greatest teachers and writers of the Church vigorously attacked the inhumanity of heathenism toward the little ones and pleaded for their religious care as the purchase of Christ. On what grounds, we may ask, did the Church do this? Was this interest a mere development or corollary of Christian sentiment? This was the age of Justin Martyr, who testifies that there were those then in the Church sixty and seventy years old who were made disciples to Christ in their childhood. Justin wrote about the year 142 A. D.; sixty or seventy years from that date carries us into the middle of the Apostolic days, midway between the death of John (102 A. D.) and the extraordinary manifestations of Pentecost when the Church was formally opened. It was the age of Clemens Romanus, of Ignatius, of Polycarp, the disciple and friend of the holy John. The idea, therefore, that the Churches of that early day, scattered throughout the vast distances of the Roman Empire, simultaneously introduced

child-membership, can not be seriously considered. Wherever Origen traveled in this same period, he found the same Church relation of children, and has left it on record that it was received from the Apostles, the only source indeed from which it could have come.

Again, to apprehend this matter clearly, we may approach the subject from another stand-point, and one entirely new. Let us suppose, for instance, that the Acts of the Apostles, which contains much concerning the founding of the Church, *was lost*—what conclusion relative to the position of children in the New Testament Church would be reached from a study of the Pauline theology? The Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians teach plainly the salvation of the human race in infancy through the atonement; that the gospel was preached to Abraham; that the blessings of the covenant made with him have come upon the Gentiles; that the Church of Christ is one with the Church of the Old Testament, and that all who are justified in Christ (and certainly children are) are of the seed of Abraham as truly as were Isaac and Jacob. Calling these facts into view, and remembering at the same moment that Paul was fully acquainted with the teachings of our Lord, touching the moral character of little children and the relation which they sustained to the kingdom of God, by what tenable hypothesis could the exclusion of believers' children from the Church of Christ be maintained? No one in the exercise of a sound critical judgment would be bold enough to conclude that the teachings of the Apostles were at variance with the practice of

the Churches they had founded. Certainly no one ever did so conclude for a thousand years, until the rise of the semi-Manichean sects of the twelfth century and the furious Anabaptists of the Reformation period.

The history of the planting of the Church, and of the conversion of families as given in the Acts, can be understood only by reference to the teachings of the Apostles as set forth in their Epistles. It must be insisted upon, therefore, that history and doctrine be studied together; and, as a preliminary fact, that the practices of the early Churches in relation to the children of believers were not antagonistic to the doctrinal teachings of the Apostles. We may now study the teachings of the days of Pentecost.

ACTS II, 38, 39:

"For the promise is to you, and to your children."

This is that part of Peter's discourse which bears directly on the membership of children. The audience were Jews and proselytes, "devout men out of every nation under heaven," and therefore understood the import of the remarkable announcement of Peter concerning Christ as the long-expected Messiah and his glorious kingdom. It is necessary to study this audience closely from the religious stand-point, for three thousand of them that day accepted the proffered Christ, and were added to the Christian Church.

I. *The Jews.* The Jewish element fully apprehended the Apostolic teaching; for the Messiah had been, from the beginning, the hope of Israel. They were also acquainted with the various views held in Judaism concerning the Messiah's kingdom; its scope

and relation to the ancient theocracy of their fathers. They could not have dreamed, and it was certainly antagonistic to all of their teachings, Scriptural and Rabbinic, that with the coming of their own Messiah, their religious blessings and privileges would be abolished, or even abridged. Every Jew in that assembly, and among the three thousand that day converted, knew that his children were included with him in the covenant made with Abraham; that they were circumcised under the solemn pledge, "I will be a God to thee and thy seed," and that that pledge had not yet been revoked; that he himself had been by this God-ordained rite numbered with the people of God in his infancy, and when of age had been formally received into full membership in the *Kahal* of Israel. In a previous chapter the position of children in the Old Testament Church has been fully treated. The facts there adduced were not to him a mere theory, but a joyful and blessed experience, for which he was ever piously thankful and nationally proud. It never could have presented itself to those Jews then listening to Peter, that his teaching that day was the death-knell of *their children's relation to the Church of the living God,* their God. That would have been to them far other than good tidings, and, in the nature of things, must have provoked antagonistic views based on Old Testament grounds. Besides the express commands of God, delivered under the most awful circumstances, and enforced by fearful threatenings, the laws and ordinances of their religion had declared the sacred relation of the Hebrew child to the people of Jehovah. The prophet,

who was ever before them when they read of the fall of Jerusalem, had promised that, in the brighter day of the future, "their children also should be as aforetime." (Jer. xxx, 20.) Moreover—and this should be specially noted—they heard nothing in the sermon to the effect that the Church was for adults only. The declaration of the Apostle leads directly to the opposite conclusion. Peter was a Jew, addressing Jews. He had not, nor had any of the disciples, yet abandoned the services of the temple, or the pure teachings of Judaism. To read, then, into this narrative or to inject into the religious feelings, aspirations, and traditions of the Hebrews of that day the Anabaptist notions of modern times, is utterly at variance with the historic spirit.

II. The second element of that audience were the proselytes. A proselyte was one who had forsaken the worship of heathenism, and had turned to the true and living God, as revealed in the teachings of Judaism. In the religious economy of the Hebrews provision was made, from the beginning, for the "stranger" (*Gêr*). Abraham was commanded to circumcise, not only his own children, but all who were in any sense his: "He that is born in thy house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed, must needs be circumcised, and my covenant shall be in thy flesh for an everlasting covenant. . . . In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael, his son, and all the men of his house; those born in the house, and those bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him." (Gen. xvii, 12 f., 26 ff.) When the ordinance of the Passover

was instituted in Egypt, the "*Gêr*" was given a place, and thereafter held under the same statutes as the born Hebrew. "Whosoever eateth that which is leavened, that soul shall be cut off from the congregation [*Edah*] of Israel, whether he be a sojourner [*Gêr*] or one that is born in the land." (Gen. xii, 19, 40–49; Num. ix, 14; xv, 15, 16.) This *Gêr*, stranger, or proselyte enters, by command of God, like the lineal descendants of Abraham, into covenant relation with Jehovah. In addition to the covenant made at Horeb, there is this other in Deuteronomy xxiv, 10 ff.: "Ye stand this day before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger [*Gêr*] that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood to the drawer of thy water, that they shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and unto his oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day." In the thirty-third chapter a similar command is given. Numerous other passages, illustrating the proselyte's position in the Hebrew economy, may be consulted (Ex. xxii, 21; xxiii, 12; Lev. xix, 10, 33; Deut. x, 8; xiv, 29; xxiv, 17; xxvi, 12; Ps. xciv, 5; cxv, 9–14; Isa. ii, 2–4; lvi, 3, 6–8, *et al;* Jer. vii, 6; xxii, 3; Ezek. xxii, 7, 29; xlii, 22; Micah iv, 1, 2; Zech. vii, 10; Mal. iii, 5.)

Of these proselytes, there were (*a*) the proselyte of the gate—*Gêr-ha-shaar*; (*b*) the sojourner—*Gêr Tosbach*; (*c*) the proselyte of the covenant—*Gêr habberith*; (*d*) and the proselyte of righteousness—*Gêr hatstsedeq.* (Edersheim, Vol. II, ap. Hertzog Real Ency., Proselyte.) These several kinds are not men-

tioned in the New Testament; but, with the exception, perhaps, of the sojourners, are spoken of under the general term "*proselytes*" (Acts ii, 10); "religious men" (vs. 5); "devout" (Acts xiii, 5 f.); "men who fear God" (Acts xiii, 16.) However, a distinction was made in New Testament times between Proselytes of the Gate and Proselytes of Righteousness. Cornelius, the centurion, is called a "devout man," yet he is also termed a "Gentile," and is said to have been one of the uncircumcised. (Acts xi, 3; Olsh. Com. *in loc.;* Neander, Plant. and Train., p. 70.) So, also, the "devout proselytes" in the synagogue of Antioch, in Pisidia, are called Gentiles. In the synagogue at Iconium there was a great multitude of Jews and also of the Greeks who believed. Here Greeks are called Gentiles, and were those whom the Jews stirred up against the Apostles. (Acts xiv, 1–5.)

The Proselytes of the Gate were those who had abandoned polytheism for Judaism. They attended the services of the synagogue, gave alms, read the Scriptures, and contributed of their means to the requirements of the sanctuary. Nevertheless, they did not enter into covenant with God. They were accounted Levitically unclean, and were not permitted to come only into the outer court of the temple (*atrium Gentilum*), the court of the Gentiles, which was separated from the inner court by a wall. (See Eph. ii, 14; also, Josephus, B. J., v, 52; Tacitus, Hist., v, 8.) They were not circumcised, nor baptized, or *washed,* as *tabillah* really means, and were not therefore in legal relation to the Mosaic cult.

The Proselytes of Righteousness were those who had fully embraced the tenets of Judaism, and were imbued with its religious spirit. They differed in no respect, as Justin Martyr said, from one that was born in the land. When a Gentile became such a proselyte, he brought his entire family with him, otherwise his conversion to Judaism would have been regarded with a suspicious watchfulness. He was first instructed in the Law, and taught its obligations; was shown how difficult was the task before him; what he must endure, as one of God's people; and all this, that he might be persuaded of the reality of the convictions moving him. After this formal instruction, he was circumcised, and a new name given him. It was impossible for one to become a Proselyte of Righteousness without circumcision. This was a fundamental institute of the law. "One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation (*Kahal*), and also for the stranger (*Gêr*) that sojourneth with you; an ordinance forever throughout your generations. As ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. One law and one manner shall be for you and for the stranger with you." (Num. xv, 15 ff.) After circumcision, the proselyte was washed, completely immersed in water. When he arose from the water he was said to be a new man; he was regarded as being "born again."

Children born after the parents were made proselytes were not baptized because they were "born in holiness" (Vebam., 78), though, of course, they were circumcised. But all children, born before the parents became proselytes, were baptized. The children of a

Jewess or of a proselyte were regarded as Jews, even if the baptism of the father was doubtful.

In the interest of dogma it has been maintained that proselyte baptism was not practiced in the days of Christ, in connection with circumcision. It is a fundamental necessity, if possible, to do away with this baptism on the part of those who deny infant baptism to have been of apostolic date. But after all that has been written on the subject since the seventeenth century, the fact of proselyte baptism in the time of Christ is accepted by the best Biblical scholarship of modern times. Edersheim says, "That *baptism* was absolutely necessary to make a proselyte, is so frequently stated as not to be disputed;" and gives Rabbinic authorities of the statement. Finally he says: "If a Jew who had become Levitically unclean required immersion, it is difficult to suppose that a heathen would have been admitted to all the services of the sanctuary without a similar purification. But we have also positive testimony (which the objections of Winer, Heil, and Leyrer, in my opinion, do not invalidate) that the baptism of proselytes existed in the time of Hillel and Shammai. For, whereas the School of Shammai is said to have allowed a proselyte who was circumcised on the eve of the Passover, to partake, after baptism, of the Passover, the School of Hillel forbade it. This controversy must be regarded as proving that at that time (previous to Christ) the baptism of proselytes was customary." The learned author gives no reference or hint as to the source of his information, as he usually does when dealing with Rabbinic matters, which, had he done, would have

saved weeks of laborious search. I have found his authority, however, and reproduce it here because of its importance in putting to rest the question in dispute.

גר שנתגייר בערב פסח
בית שמאי אומרים טובל ואכל
את פסחו לערב ובית הלל
אומרים הפורש מן הערלה
כפורשמן הקבר

LATIN TRANSLATION (Surrenhusius).—Aliengia qui factus est proselytus vesperi Sabbathi, schola Shamai dicit, immerget se, et comedat Pascha suum vesperi. Schola Hillelis dicit, qui separat se a præputio, est ut ille qui separat se a sepultura.*

This, I think, must be the authority referred to: "The School of Shammai said that a stranger who became a proselyte on the eve of Sabbath, may immerse himself, and eat the Passover that evening. The School of Hillel said, he who separates himself from the prepuce is as one who separates himself from a sepulcher;" that is, he is unclean until he washes himself. Maimonides in "Imri. Biah," c. 13, also says: "And so in all ages, when an Ethnic [Gentile] is willing to enter into covenant, and gather himself under the wings of the majesty of God, and take upon him the yoke of the law, he must be circumcised and baptized, and bring a sacrifice; as it is written, 'As ye are, so shall the stranger be.' How are you? By circumcision and baptism and bringing a sacrifice, so likewise the stranger [*Gêr, proselyte*] through all generations, by circumcision, and baptism, and bringing of a sacrifice." He also says that a proselyte under

* The Mishna, De Paschate, Surrenhusius Folio, Vol. I, 167, at top.

age—that is, twelve years and a day (girls, thirteen and a day)—is baptized as an infant; that is, by the assent or knowledge of the house or session of judgment. The Jerusalem Mishna and the Babylonian Mishna both mention the rules for the admission of girls under three years and a day as proselytes, so that children were received as proselytes.

Such, then, with their religious background, were the audience to whom the Apostle announced: "The promise is to you and to your children." Certain writers affirm that this promise was not the promise made to Abraham, but the promise of the Holy Spirit made in the prophecy of Joel. Let this be granted. If, then, the gift of the Holy Ghost fitted those present and believing for membership in the Church—and it did—and since this same gift was come upon the children—"for the promise is unto you and your children"—by what method of interpretation are the children of the three thousand who were added to the Church that day to be excluded? Again, if they were excluded, it is extraordinary in the highest degree that such a tremendous revolution as their exclusion would be, could have occurred and not the slightest mention made of it in any Book of the New Testament. There were many minor changes made, and many incidents of a peculiar nature in the first days of the Church at Jerusalem, and the record is made. But here is a change of the most momentous character, one which destroys an institution older than the Mosaic law—an institution established by God himself in the house of Abraham, when he established the Church—that is, child-membership in his Church—

and not a single line is given to record the event, or that there was even an inquiry or protest on the part of either the Jews or the proselytes. Perhaps none of the three thousand had any children.

But it is sometimes averred, apparently as a last effort to destroy the force of arguments similar to the one employed, that the children referred to by the Apostle were the grown-up posterity of all who would become believers. This, however, even if correct, which it is far from being, does not relieve the question. The exclusion of the infant posterity then existing must be accounted for, since the children then living were in as much need of the divine promise as those who might be born in coming generations.

Now, the proof that the children were included with their believing parents in Church membership on the Day of Pentecost is seen in what has already been said concerning Jewish and proselyte conditions of membership in the Old Testament Church, and also in the fact of the unity of the Old and New Testament Churches. Moreover, Peter was intensely Jewish, and endeavored to retain much of Judaism, while being loyal to the central facts of Christianity. This was true of all the other Apostles. The break had not yet come between Christianity and Judaism as a system; nor did it occur for some years after. Those who believed in Christ still worshiped at proper times, like the Apostles, in the temple; and it had not yet entered into the thoughts of Jew or proselyte that in embracing the spiritual truths of the Old Testament, as set forth by the Apostles, and in accepting Jesus of Nazareth as the Hope of Israel, he had by

that act excommunicated his family, who, up to that particular moment, were true believers in God, and accepted by him. Too much emphasis can not be laid upon these facts. For, they being true, it is absurd beyond measure to imagine that these Jewish Christians, who, as the Book of Acts shows, would not believe that Gentiles could be admitted within the holy circle of Christianity without first being made Jews, would exclude their own children from the blessing which had been promised them in their father Abraham. Inasmuch, then, as it was a statute in Israel from the dawn of antiquity that children should be of the congregation of Israel; and also that God himself had instituted a rite which should be the sign of membership in that body; and, further, since the promises to Abraham were made in his flesh (the "covenant in his flesh") and those same promises were pledged to every child circumcised in Israel from that day up to the very day of Pentecost, and since the Apostle announces no prohibition of the children coming with their parents, but, on the other hand, declares "the promise is unto you and to your children," it surely devolves upon those who assert that the children were excluded on the day of Pentecost to produce certain and irrefragable proof of that assertion.

As a matter of fact, not a single line in all literature of that age, or of the age succeeding, can be furnished.

Acts xv.

The history of the dissension concerning circumcision, as recorded in Acts xv, goes far towards estab-

lishing, as we think, the membership of children in the Church at Jerusalem. That Church, as we have seen, was composed of Jews and proselytes. The Jewish element still retained, along with their Christian belief, much that was of pure Hebraism. For it must be remembered that Judaism was not all in the Law.

To the legal and priestly rule of the Hebrew conscience there had been added the prophetic or teaching (and therefore of believing) aspect of the Divine will. The prophets continually impressed the truth upon the people that the "sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;" that "mercy is better than sacrifice." This revelation which God had made to Israel was addressed to the heart, as Oehler says, even the revelation of the Law (Deut. vi, 6); for its central thought was supreme love to God. Hence the lawyer in the Gospel, when asked by the Lord what the Law said concerning the true life, replied that the Law required him to love the Lord with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. Abraham was accepted by faith, and his children received thereby the seal of the righteousness which he had obtained, and the sign of the covenant which he had entered into with God. Faith, like a silver thread, glistens through all the teachings of the Old Testament, and from a prophet of the Old Testament the Apostle quotes the words which became the watchword of Pauline Christianity—"The just shall live by faith." Those Jews who accepted Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah did not consider Christianity as a *new religion*, as is clear from the remarks of James, the head of the Church at Jerusalem, as re-

corded in this chapter.* They did not, therefore, regard it as antagonistic to the Law of Moses, but as fulfilling that law. Nor did they suppose that in accepting Christ they rejected Moses. Christianity, to them, was the spiritual content of the Old Testament. Many of the Jews continued in the works of the law, without being bound by them; and all the Apostles exercised their liberty in this regard, as we find even Paul doing, in paying his vows, and Peter and John, going up to the temple at the hour of prayer.

While this was the general belief and attitude of the Church at Jerusalem, there was in it a party who, not content with this free relation toward the law, went to extremes, and, burying the idea of justification by faith in Christ in their intense zeal for the perpetuity of Mosaism, demanded that the Gentiles should be circumcised; that is, become Jews, before they should be admitted to the Church. Without going further on this line, is it not clear that if Gentiles became Proselytes of Righteousness, their children would be also circumcised and baptized, and by that very fact also become, with their parents, members of the Church? Let it be granted that these extremists did not represent the mind of the Apostles gathered at the Jerusalem Church on the one question of compulsory circumcision, was there any Apostolic opposition to the Gentiles entering the Church by

*This James the Less, or Younger, the son of Cleopas and Mary, and called the Lord's brother (Gal. i, 19), was put to death by the Pharisees, under the usurper Ananias, the high priest, between the death of Festus and the arrival of his successor, Albinus.

baptism? But if the rite of circumcision was disallowed by the Apostolic Council, under which, and by virtue of which rite, the proselyte's children accompanied him, since, as we have seen, he would hardly have been admitted as a Proselyte of Righteousness without them, did it follow that the children of the Gentiles were thereby cut off? From the nature of the case, the lack of circumcision would no more prevent the Gentile children from being added to the Church than it would the Gentile parent.

Further, from the fact that the question of circumcision was raised in the Church at all as a condition of membership, there is evidence that the children of the Gentiles—in a word, their households or families—were admitted. That the children of Jewish parents were admitted, can not be reasonably doubted; for, as we have seen, the consecration of children, and numbering them as of God's people, was commanded in the law. *Now, it was the observance of the law for which the Church at Jerusalem contended.* But would the whole Church contend for that which it had openly and on principle violated? Would they contend for child-membership, which circumcision meant, if they had excluded children? Every Jew in that Church knew that his children had been circumcised, and every proselyte knew that his children had been circumcised and baptized like himself, before he became a Jew. This yoke the Jewish-Christians would put on the Gentiles; if put on, then their children of course would come in with them. But we can not see how, *by its not being put upon them,* their children were excluded.

ACTS XXI, 17–21.

Several years after the events recorded in the last chapter cited, the Apostle Paul went up to Jerusalem to render an account of what God had done among the Gentiles. The report of his success had preceded him, as did also false reports concerning his teaching. This last was a matter of serious moment to the welfare of the Jerusalem Church. After the presbyters had glorified God for the success of his Word, James, the chief presbyter, laid the matter before the Apostle, saying: "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law; and they are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, *saying that they ought not to circumcise their children,* nor walk after the customs." Now it will be observed that Paul is not charged for opposing the rite of circumcision—this his accusers doubtless included in their accusation—but he is distinctly charged with having opposed the circumcision of children. Now, being opposed to their circumcision also meant being opposed to their Church membership; for without it, in the opinion of the Jerusalem Church, they could not be members of the Church. *If then children of the thousands* (myriads) *who belonged to the Church in Jerusalem were not circumcised and were not members of the Church with their parents,* it is extraordinary that such excitement should have arisen when it was learned that the Apostle had been teaching against child-circumcision and child-membership. No reason can be assigned; certainly *they* had none for

bringing this grave charge against the Apostle, if they also had excluded children. Nor is there any reason why James and Paul should be solicitous to prove to the multitude that the accusation was false. The Apostle, acting on the advice of James, went through the rite of purification in the temple, as evidence that he himself "walked orderly and kept the law." (Verse 24.) Paul had never taught what he was charged with. Before this time the Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians had been written, in which he taught the salvation of children through the blessings which had come from the atonement. He did not believe that circumcision availed anything in Christ Jesus, but that was very far from being equivalent to an exclusion of children from the Church of God. From a study of this event which might be extended much further, if it were deemed necessary, it is certain that children belonged with their parents to the Church at Jerusalem. It will be seen also that that Church, with James at their head, believed that the Christian Church was not something totally distinct from the Church of the Old Testament. For, had they so believed or had been so taught, it is also inexplicable why they should hope to carry over into the new religion the distinctive badge, and covenant sign of the old. And, further, it is passing strange why the Apostles should voluntarily deceive the people. For, if child-membership was contrary to Christian faith and practice, why should James, the Lord's brother, be so solicitous as to advise Paul to prove to the people that he was not opposed to child-circumcision, which meant child-mem-

bership in the Church, as it did from time immemorial, and was so understood at that time wherever the Old Testament was known? And again, why should Paul, the uncompromising leader of anti-Jewish Christianity, why should James and all the elders of the Jerusalem Church, have engaged in what must in truth be called a system of deception, contemptible in its nature and destructive in its results—which the advice of James was, and the following of which on the part of Paul was—if they did not practice and cordially believe in the membership of children?

James in his advice to Paul shows (1) that he was not opposed to Jewish customs and child-membership as it had always been held, and (2) that he did not believe Paul to hold or teach a contrary doctrine. By accepting the advice of James, on hearing the specific charge against him, Paul shows, and it is as clear to us as it was to James and to the elders of the Church, that he was in perfect accord with the views of the leaders of the Church at Jerusalem on that subject. He did oppose the Jewish doctrine of circumcision as a means of salvation, for he based that not on works, but on faith in Christ's atonement. This belief and teaching would do no violence to the theology of the Old Testament; for Abraham, as Paul had shown in his Epistles, and as was also well known to every Jew, was accounted righteous, not by reason of his works, but on account of his faith. But that was far different from excluding the children of believers from the Church, for the existence and spread of which the Jewish nation had been elected, as the Apostle shows in the Epistle to the Romans.

CHAPTER X.

CHILDREN IN THE CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

(AMONG THE GENTILES, AND THE DISPERSION.)

WHEN the Apostles began the missionary work which resulted in the establishment of Christianity throughout Asia Minor, and, through the special labors of St. Paul, in the border-lands of Europe, the center of their operations in any given place was the Jewish synagogue, or the proseuche. Everywhere, from Babylon to Rome, the Jews were dispersed, and in whatever place they settled, there they maintained a synagogue or a place of prayer. In the Acts of the Apostles we find Gentiles connected with these synagogues as proselytes. Into these sanctuaries the Apostles habitually went, and in the order of the service preached the startling truths of the gospel as their Master, Jesus, once did in the synagogue at Nazareth. Being Jews themselves, and having a common national feeling with and for those who were among the Gentiles, it was most natural that they should make the synagogue the starting-point of their labors. It also gave them the opportunity to preach to the Gentiles, those God-fearing men and women who had drawn nigh to the true God, as taught in Judaism. The result often was, that a synagogue became a Christian Church, or that

a majority of the members withdrew and formed a Church; and men like Crispus became chief pastors, as they had before been chiefs of the synagogues. The transition from the synagogue to the Christian Church was made without any other change than the acceptance of Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah of God, and what that implied. The position of the Hebrew Christian in the Church thus formed, is deserving of special attention. The Gentile Christian, who also had been a member of the synagogue, and had learned all he knew of God from these same Hebrews, would still feel the need of instruction. It was no unimportant matter that the gospel was to the Jew *first*, and then to the Gentile. To the Jew had been committed the oracles of God; and in a degree immeasurably above all other nations he was grounded in the truths, the hopes, and promises of his religion. He was connected by blood with the great family of Abraham, through whom these blessings had come upon the Gentiles; he was in contact more or less with the land and the people where and among whom the mighty events of the Jewish Scripture had taken place. In the nature of things, then, the Christian Jew would continue, by reason of these things, the leader in the newly formed Church.

In all the Churches mentioned in the Acts, we find the Jew and the Gentile. In view of this, the same question which confronted us in the case of the Church at Jerusalem arises here. What was then said concerning the Jew and the Gentile proselyte, belongs here also. Every Jew in the synagogue had been circumcised, as had also his children, who, with

him, were members of the synagogue. Every proselyte had been circumcised and baptized, and his children also, if born previous to his conversion. When, then, a synagogue, or members of it, became Christian, we must believe that the children went with their parents. Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue at Corinth, turned unto Christ "with all his house," which is a plain statement that all of his family were entered and recorded as members of the Christian Church then founded at Corinth. It matters not whether he had any children or not, the *principle* is that which is to be considered. It is incredible to think that Crispus, who was certainly versed in Holy Scripture, would have unchurched his children. There had been no command given to that effect. If they were excluded because they could not believe, that same disability, in the face of Jehovah's command, would have excluded them from the true Israel of God under the theocracy, which every Jew knew was false. Moreover, not to mention the intense Jewish prejudice for everything Jewish, the defense of the Christian Jew against the charge of his late co-religionist that he had forsaken Moses and the God of his fathers, was that he had embraced that concerning which Moses and the prophets did write, and that, therefore, instead of ceasing to be a son of Abraham and one of the holy seed, he had truly become, as never before, a member of the true Israel of God. But what reply could be made to the fact, had it been true, that contrary to the teachings of Jehovah in Israel from the days of Abraham, he had unchurched or excluded his children from the blessings

of the covenant? It is by thus studying these times that much light is thrown on the apparently strange fact that among the Hebrew Christians the circumcision of children continued until after the fall of Jerusalem, when the Jewish nation was broken, its religious rites and ceremonies discontinued, and the Hellenic or Gentile element became the dominant spirit in the Christian Church. If the rational view, which we have presented all along, of the actual condition of things at the founding of the Church is rejected, it is at the cost of a common-sense interpretation of history. We must resort, for the explanation of what we can not destroy, to fanciful and far-fetched possibilities, discourse vaguely on what might have been, and finally, by objectifying our prejudices and clothing them with the attributes of belief, pay the penalty of those who, forsaking the substance for the shadow, the facts of history for the vagaries of the imagination, forget the semblance of truth in the illusiveness of falsehood, and wander in the blindness of negation.

The writer of the Acts never dreamed that his simple narrative would become so obscure in its simplest utterances; that, for instance, when he wrote of households or families embracing Christianity he intended to omit the young members of the family. He nowhere intimates that he is to be so understood. He writes in the common language, and therefore intends that he shall be understood as that language is commonly understood. Those who immediately succeeded the Apostles, and whose mother tongue was Greek, and those whose parents and teachers had listened to these successors, and had been nurtured in the doctrine and

customs of the Church, had no difficulty in understanding the household baptisms mentioned in the Acts, nor the references to children in the Epistles of St. Paul, as their writings, the inscriptions in the Catacombs, and the universal practice of the Church, East and West, abundantly testify.

We may study some instances:

Acts xvi, 13, 15.

"And when she was baptized and her household," etc.

If Lydia by this act became a Christian, the members of her family also became members of the Church. It will be observed that this pious woman was a proselyte, for she "worshiped God;" and what the law and custom was concerning the children or members of a proselyte's family, has been already set forth. How old the members of her family were it is idle to conjecture. They were still under her care, and had not established families of their own apart from her. They are not mentioned as being grown, and of their faith nothing is said.

The Peshito version of the New Testament, which was in use among all the Churches of Syria and Mesopotamia, and which was made by some one of the Apostles or evangelists, as Mark, or Thaddeus, the Apostle of Mesopotamia (as he is called), or by some of their co-laborers in the gospel, renders this passage and all similar passages in harmony with the view of child-membership: "Her heart our Lord opened, and she hearkened to what Paul spoke, and she was baptized and the sons [*beni*, children] of her house." The *practice* of all the Churches in Syria and Meso-

potamia determines clearly how they understood the teachings of their version, concerning which James Martin, a professor at Wittenberg, in his preface to the Syriac New Testament, 1610, says: "Let those who speak lightly of this version know that the Syriac, if not the very language in which Christ himself conversed with his Apostles, approaches very nearly to the vernacular tongue of our Savior and his companions, and that into it the recent books of the New Testament were the first of all translated, and that, too, at the very time when the Apostles (those divine teachers whom Christ himself had educated, and who were enlightened and instructed by the Holy Spirit) were laying the first foundation of the Christian Church among the nations."* Origen, in his "Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans," says: "For this also the Church received, by tradition [*traditionem*] from the Apostles, to give baptism to young children [*parvulis baptismum dare*]." (Bk. 5.) We need not be shown, of course, that that made the children members of the Church. He says that this practice the Church received by *tradition*, and some have endeavored to make it appear that, therefore, the practice had no real ground or reason in apostolic teaching. One is pained to find even the great German critic, Meyer, "the prince of exegetes," and one therefore who ought to have been superior to the

* Quoted by Dr. Murdock in the Appendix to his translation of the Peshito. Many other scholars are quoted by him, and a more valuable *resume* of information on this subject is not to be found. See also Etheridge's Prolegomena to his Syriac "Apostolical Acts and Epistles," London, 1849.

weakness of sectarian dogmatics, holding this view. He affirms that this baptism of children was not an "apostolic ordinance," and refers specially to the word *tradition* in this quotation from Origen. The word *traditio, παράδοσις, tradition,* signifies—as Meyer, it seems, ought to have known—in the writings of the Church Fathers, and also in the New Testament, a certain body of facts handed down either by *writing* or *speaking.* For example, Irenæus, reflecting on the false teachers of his day, says: "But, again, when we refer them to that *tradition,* which originates from the Apostles," etc. (Against Heresies, Bk. III, c. ii.) "It is within the power of all, therefore, in every Church, who may wish to see the truth, to contemplate clearly the *tradition* of the Apostles, manifested throughout the whole world," etc. (Cap. iii.) In chapter iv he speaks of the many nations of those barbarians, who believe in Christ having "salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit, without paper and ink, and carefully preserving the ancient *tradition,*" etc., by which he means the truths of the Gospel announced by the Apostles, since those of whom he speaks had not the "written documents." (See also chap. xx, Bk. V.) Clement of Alexandria (Stromata, Bk. VII, c. xvi): "As, then, if a man should, similarly to those drugged by Circe, become a beast, so he who has spurned the Ecclesiastical *tradition,* and darted off to the opinions of heretical men, has ceased to be a man of God and to remain faithful to the Lord." Hippolytus terms the New Testament the *tradition* of the Apostles, as does also Gregory Nazianzen, and Suicer (Thes., Vol. II) gives several

instances of the term being applied to the Gospels. The Apostle Paul uses the same term in the same sense as above, and not as denoting anything extra Scriptural. In 2 Thessalonians ii he says: "Hold fast the *traditions* which you have been taught, whether *by word or our epistle.*" This proves that tradition includes *written* instructions as well as oral.

It is therefore wholly uncritical for Meyer to refer to the term tradition as used by Origen, as if he meant thereby something unhistorical, supposititious, or legendary. Now, Origen was born of Christian parents, in Alexandria, eighty-five years after the days of the Apostles. His father was a martyr, his grandfather and grandmother and great-grandfather were Christians. He was baptized in infancy, nurtured in the Holy Scriptures, and, says Mosheim, became the greatest luminary of the Christian world; a man of immense genius, of fervent piety, of extensive erudition, whose "name will be transmitted with honor through the annals of time as long as learning and genius shall be esteemed among men." Eusebius tells us that he lived for some time in Greece and in Rome; that he spent some time in Arabia and Cappadocia; that at Cæsarea he was requested by the bishops to expound the Sacred Scriptures publicly in the Church; that he wrote his commentary on Isaiah in Palestine, in which country and in Syria he passed the most of his life. In these regions the *first* Churches were founded by the Apostles, and this eminent man of God, scholar, traveler, and commentator, having full knowledge of all the Churches, their manners and customs, and being in constant intercourse with their

chief pastors, especially with Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, and Theotiacus, bishop of Cæsarea,—this man says: "The Church had from the Apostles the tradition, or instruction, to give baptism to young children, according to the saying of our Lord concerning infants," etc. In his "Homily on Leviticus" he again says: "Why, according to the *usage*, or custom, of the Church, it [baptism] is likewise given to little children." In his "Homily on Luke" he further says: "Little children are baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Of what sins?" etc. He then continues his remarks on the cleansing from original sin. Here, then, is a man "of great and uncommon abilities," who had lived in the Eastern countries—in Syria, in Palestine, and adjoining countries—where the Peshito version was made, and among the Churches and people by whom it was used as our version is among us to-day, and he testifies that children were embraced by the Church in every country he visited. Everywhere he finds the same belief on that subject, and the same practice. This, then, without the possibility of a rational, candid doubt, proves in what sense the conversion of Lydia's family, and that of the jailer at Philippi, and that of Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue at Corinth, was understood by the Christians who formed the first Churches planted by the Apostles in Syria and Mesopotamia. In

Acts xvi, 31, 34,

we have another instance, similar to the above, of an entire household or family becoming Christian. The Syriac reads: "And they spake the word of the Lord

to him and to all the sons, or children, of his house." "And he was baptized immediately, he and all the sons of his house." It is a misfortune that two words in the Greek, both different, are translated in the English version by one word. Those words are *οἰκία, oikia, a house, a building;* and *οἶκος, oikos, a family, descendants.* Peter, after his release from prison, came to the house, *oikia,* of Mary. (Acts xii, 12, 14.) The dwelling of Simon, the tanner, is called *oikia.* (Acts iii, 6.) This term is wider in meaning than *oikos,* for it includes the slaves, the attendants, and various servants attached to a family. But the term *oikos* properly signifies a family in the narrower sense—Septuagint (2 Sam. vii, 11, 27, 29). And since the terms "house of Jacob," "house of Israel," "house of David," etc., so often met with in the Scripture, must include children, the term must include young children and infants. Now, it sometimes includes children as distinct from their parents. (Compare Gen. xlvi, 27, with vs. 5.) In verse five mention is made of the "little ones;" in verse twenty-seven these are embraced without modification in the phrase "house of Jacob" [*οἶκον Ἰακώβ*]. In Exodus i, 1, the same word is used that is employed in the chapter under consideration (Acts xvi, 34): "Every man and his *πανοικὶ, whole family.*" In order to keep children out of the Church of the New Testament, we can not say that no children came up out of Egypt in the houses of their fathers. For other references, consult the original and Septuagint in Deut. xxv, 9; Num. xviii, 11; 2 Sam. xii, 11; 1 Sam. ii, 3; Job xx, 28; Ruth iv, 11, 12; Ps. lxviii, 6; Isa.

xiii, 16. In some of these passages the word has reference to children only. Other texts may be cited in which the word embraces young children under the care of the parent; *e. g.*, 1 Timothy iii, 4, 5: "One that ruleth well his own house [οἶκος], having his *children* in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own house [*oikos*] how shall he take care of the Church of God?" Again: "Let the deacons be the husband of one wife, ruling their *children*, even their own house [*oikos*] well." (Vs. 12.)

Finally, in the whole of the New Testament there is not a single passage in which *oikia* is used in connection with the administration of baptism. The *oikia* is never baptized, but the *oikos* is. Hence, when the Apostle mentions the houses of Lydia, Crispus, Stephanas, Aristobulus, the Philippian jailer, Onesiphorus, and Narcissus, we must understand him to mean *the family* in every instance; and, then, if we would exclude children from the Church, take the astounding position, without the shadow of proof in support of it, that in these families, and in all the families who joined the Christian Church in Europe and Asia, from the day of Pentecost to the death of St. John, A. D. 102 (or 100), a period of seventy years, there were no children! In his Epistle to the Smyrneans, Ignatius (died A. D. 107) says: "I salute the *families* [τοὺς οἴκους] of my brethren, with their wives and *children*."

If, now, we turn to the Epistles of St. Paul, we shall find proof positive that there were children in the families composing the Churches he had founded,

and that they were included in the Christian community. From what has been already said on the Jewish and proselyte composition of those Churches, we know that they were so reckoned. That they were so regarded by the Apostles is evidenced in

1 Corinthians vii, 12, 14.

"Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy."

Every Bible-reader knows that to be "unclean" was the same as being uncircumcised, and therefore as being outside covenant relation with God. No unclean person could be numbered with the holy people, the people of the covenant. He was a heathen. The term *ἅγια, holy,* is the New Testament word for the Old Testament term קדש, *kodesh,* "pure, clean." It is used by the Apostle as the common designation of the members of the Church. Romans xv, 25: "I go to Jerusalem to minister to the *saints* [τοῖς ἁγίοις]." So also in the Salutations: "To the *saints* [τοῖς ἁγίοις] which are at Ephesus; to the *saints* and faithful at Colosse, at Philippi."

This term "holy" is never given in the Scriptures to any but those who, in the Old Testament, are in covenant with God, or who, in the New Testament, are members of the Christian Church. It is never used by the New Testament writers as designating the Jewish people of the New Testament period. It belongs, in their *usus loquendi,* to the members of Christ's body. The unbelieving husband, even, is declared by the Apostle to be in some sense under the holy influence of the believing wife. It will not be understood that this designation "holy" affirms personal inward

holiness of any one thus styled, since that could be known to God alone, but that such ones are separated unto God and his service, as the Israelites, though not all holy, are called a "holy nation;" and the members of the Church at Corinth and elsewhere are called "saints." In this instance the word is used in its ecclesiastical, and not in its spiritual, sense.

Now, Paul says that the children of one believing parent are *clean, pure,* thus designating them by the identical title the members of the Church bear. Knowing the teaching of the Apostle on infant salvation, and that at Jerusalem he refuted the charge that he taught the Jews not to circumcise their children, we can see no other conclusion than that he considered believers' children as within the visible fold of Christ. Mr. Wesley paraphrases the passage thus: "Else your children would have brought up heathens; whereas, *now they* are Christians. As if he had said, Ye see the proof of it before your eyes." Meyer, in his Commentary, observes: "That Christians' children are *not* profane, outside of the theocratic community and the Divine covenant, and belonging to the unholy *kosmos,* but on the contrary *holy,* is the *conceded* point from which the Apostle proves that the non-believing husband is sanctified through his believing wife." Dr. A. Clarke has a lengthy note on the same passage, the essence of which is: "If this kind of relative sanctification were not allowed, the children of these persons could not be received into the Christian Church, nor enjoy any rights or privileges as *Christians;* but the Church of God never scrupled to admit such children as members, just as well as she did those

who had sprung from parents, both of whom were Christians." The fact is, this passage demonstrates the Church membership of children under the teaching of the Apostle. The difficulty which he had to settle grew out of the primal question, If the children of parents, both being believers, are holy, what is the status of children of parents *one* only of whom is a believer? Now, if the children of parents *both Christians* were not holy, how could the children having only one Christian parent be holy? The Apostle, as Meyer says, "concedes;" he assumes, as a matter of fact then known and accepted, that believers' children are holy, and thus settles the important question, on that principle, concerning the conjugal relationship between an unbelieving husband and a Christian wife.

The final proof in the New Testament for Church membership of children, as it has been defined in this work, is found in the Apostolic recognition of children as Church members. This is important. In the Epistle to the Ephesian Church the greeting of the Apostle is to the "*holy ones*," and to the *faithful* in Christ Jesus. In this Epistle, children, under the care of their parents, are mentioned in a manner which proves their membership just as clearly as the same manner, when employed with respect to adults, proves their membership.

EPHESIANS VI, 1, 4.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord. . . . Fathers, bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

It is sometimes said that this exhortation to the children does not imply their Church membership, since they could be exhorted without being members.

This is correct, but it proves too much. For the same argument would leave the Church at Ephesus without any members, since the fathers and mothers and servants, exhorted in precisely similar terms, could all be exhorted without being members of the Church. To assume a *possibility,* and then make it a universal *certainty,* is not reason, but unreason, and its irrationality is its own refutation. Only on the ground that the children addressed belonged to the Church, and were so recognized by the Apostle, can the particular tone of the exhortation be accounted for—"Children, obey your parents *in the Lord.*" The parallel passage (Col. iii, 20) reads: "For this is well pleasing in the Lord." Again, fathers are exhorted fondly to cherish them in the nurture (*instruction*) and admonition (*discipline*) of the Lord. The Syriac reads: "Train them up in the discipline and doctrine of our Lord." As might be expected, and in conformity with the fact of the unity of the Old Testament and New Testament Churches, as affirmed in his Epistles, Paul continues, in the economy of Christianity, the Old Testament idea of the religious nurture of children.

In Colossians iii, 20, 21, we have similar instruction. The salutation, like that to the Ephesians, is to the saints (holy ones) and faithful brethren. Children are included, for they are exhorted as are other members of the Church. From a study of these several passages it is conclusive that children were in the Church of the Apostolic Period. We do not suppose, and have not taught, that they were members in the fullest sense. Our position is, that the position of children in the New Testament Church was precisely

similar to the position of children in the Church of the Old Testament; that the Church of the New Testament being a continuation of the Church of the Old Testament, the Apostles and believing Jews continued to hold and practice the same belief that they did hold and practice before the Church of Christ was formally opened. Strong objections will be made to this statement, among many of which will be the one couched in the counter-statement that, without positive faith on the part of the applicant, there was no admission to the Christian Church. Such objections, and many others not here mentioned, have been carefully considered. They have not been set aside as trivial and of little weight; rather have they been studied with the belief that in most of them lay a germ of truth. This has been recognized, and the chaff rejected. The objection stated is, perhaps, the most important. Meyer stumbles over it, and the truth in it is, that just as no proselyte, under the Old Testament, was admitted, without faith in the God of Israel and the revelation he had given in the Sacred Book, into the Kahal of Jehovah, among the people of God, so no Jew or proselyte could enter the Christian Church without faith in Jesus Christ, the Messiah of God, as the Redeemer which was to come as a Savior from sin. But since the faith of an alien, under the Old Testament, was taken as the faith of the family, and the children were taken in with the proselyte parents under the wings of the majesty of God, so in the Church of the New Testament the faith of believing parents sanctified the children, "else were your children unclean, but now they are holy."

But there is also historical proof of child-membership, based on these passages from the Epistles to Ephesians and Colossians. It will be noted that the members of these Churches are called "*faithful.*" This significant word entered into the heart of the Church, and, because of its comprehensive meaning, continued long as a beautiful and holy title of the Christian brethren. The inscriptions from the Catacombs show that this word "faithful" was given to the children of believers. Many instances could be cited, but the following will suffice (Taylor's Facts and Ev.): "A 'Faithful,' descended from ancestors who were Faithfuls. Here lies Zosimus. He lived two years, one month, and twenty-five days."

This inscription bears the *ichthus* (fish) and *anchor*, symbols approved by Clement of Alexandria (Pædag., Lib. III, c. 2) at the close of the second century, A. D. 185. How, we may inquire, did the ancestors of this child Zosimus, who were themselves "Faithfuls," understand the term and its implications? Even in this inquiry we may not investigate fruitlessly, hopeless as it may seem. Origen was born five years after the above date. His father, as already stated, was a Christian, and died a martyr; his grandfather and his great-grandfather also were Christians. If from this date, A. D. 185, we subtract twenty-five years—a moderate number—for Origen's father, forty for his grandfather, and forty for his great-grandfather, we are brought to the year A. D. 80. Some ten or twelve years previous, Mark the Evangelist died as a martyr, having founded the Church at Alexandria, where Origen was born. The Apostle John was yet alive,

as were many "faithful" men to whom had been committed the doctrines of the gospel. Here, then, are hundreds of Christian men, with their teachers, commissioned by the Apostles or the Evangelists, Timothy and Titus, according to the instructions of Paul, who were contemporary with the ancestors of Origen. Is it within the region of truth to suppose that these Christians did not know the Apostolic doctrine, nor the common belief and practice of their own day? How, then, did they understand that doctrine and practice? That is easily understood from the fact that Origen was baptized in his infancy. But whence did his father obtain this belief? His father, also, it is said, was baptized in infancy. Where, then, did the grandfather get it but from the great-grandfather? Origen was brought up in the Church as his father had been before him, and all his ancestors of several generations. A "Faithful," then, was one within the pale of the Church. Another instance: "To Nina Florentina, a most sweet and innocent infant, *made a Faithful* by her parent." The parent in seclusion baptizes the child; but, not satisfied with the manner or the circumstances—for from the inscription it is evident persecution was devastating the Church—the child is again "made a Faithful at the eighth hour of the night, at the last extremity of life. She lived but four hours afterward, the rite having been performed according to custom. She died at Hybla. . . . On which decease her parents wept with each other every moment of the night, open lamentations for the *Christian* dead being prohibited as treason. Her corpse, with its coffin, by the presbyters, was interred in the

burying-place of the Christian martyrs, the fourth of the Nones of October." (Taylor's Apostolic Bap., New York, 1844, 145.) This child was, the inscription tells us, a "daughter of Zoilus the Corrector." Correctors are mentioned as early as A. D. 117. "Cynacus, a *Faithful*, died eight days less than three years." "Eustafia, the mother, places this in commemoration of her son Polichronis, a *Faithful*, who lived three years." "Urcia Florentina, a *Faithful*, rests here in peace. She lived five years, eight months, and eight days."

It is evident, then, that from the days of the Apostles the Church gathered the children to her bosom. I am fully aware that Tertullian, the contemporary of Origen, may be, and has been, quoted in opposition to this view. I am also just as certain that no Antipedobaptist has presented Tertullian with the historical background necessary to a correct understanding of his position. He did not oppose the baptism of children, nor their admission to the Church, on Scriptural grounds, nor as being opposed to the practice of the Church, nor because it was a new thing introduced by heretical teachers. For none of these reasons did he antagonize what was then, as Origen (who had far better facilities for knowing than Tertullian) tells us, the practice of the Universal Church. His sole ground of opposition, besides the idea that it was more useful (*utilior est*) to wait, was theological, and that it should be deferred till they were confirmed in continence.

The historical evidence for child membership from the Apostolic Period is complete and conclusive. A

final *résumé* of it may appropriately close this chapter. Immediately connected with the Apostle John, by whom he was appointed bishop of Smyrna, is

POLYCARP.—This holy man was, as Irenæus his disciple tells us, "instructed by the Apostles, and was brought into contact with many who had seen Christ." (Adv. Hær., III, 3; Euseb., Hist. Eccl., IV, 14.) In the year A. D. 167, about sixty-five years after the death of John the Apostle, he sealed his faith in martyrdom. When urged by his persecutors to reproach Christ, he declared: "*Eighty and six years have I served him,* and he never did me any injury; how, then, can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?" (Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. I, p. 88, Clark's Ed.) *Polycarp, then, was made a disciple of Christ in childhood.*

IRENÆUS.—Dodwell puts the date of his birth A. D. 97, but A. D. 120 is probably correct. He was the disciple of the venerable Polycarp, and in his Epistle to Florinus recounts how Polycarp used to relate the discourses of the Apostles, and what things he had heard from them concerning the Lord. In his great work "Against Heresies," Irenæus says: "For he [Christ] came to save all persons by himself; all, I mean, who are by him regenerated unto God [*renascuntur in Deum*], infants [*infantes*], and little ones [*parvulos*], and children [*pueros*], and youths and elder persons. Therefore he went through the different ages, for infants being made an infant, sanctifying infants," etc. The word *renascuntur, regenerated,* is a term used in the second century, and afterwards to denote baptism. Although this is disputed, as every-

thing must be that favors the Church relation of children, there is such undoubted proof of it that with those who understand the force of argument, it is no longer a debatable question. For instance, Justin Martyr, referring to the manner of admission into the Church, says: "Then we bring them to a place where there is water and we *regenerate* them by the same way of *regeneration* by which we were *regenerated.*" (Apolog. Prima; see also Clem. Alex., Pædegog., Bk. I, c. 6.)

JUSTIN MARTYR.—He was born in Flavia Neapolis, a city of Samaria, about A. D. 114. He studied in the schools of the philosophers, became a Christian, and suffered martyrdom under Marcus Aurelius. His writings are among the most important of that age, when Christianity was contending with all the world-powers for an existence. He wrote a little before Irenaeus, and how harmoniously they both express the belief of the Church then just as the Apostles left it, will be seen in this extract, which we have quoted before (Apol. II):

"There are many persons among us, of both sexes, of *sixty and seventy years of age, who were made disciples to Christ from their childhood,* that continue uncorrupted."

ORIGEN, A. D. 185.—This writer has been cited, and bore testimony, that the admission of children by baptism into the Church was derived from the Apostles, and that it was the *usage* of the Church, *secundum ecclesiæ observantiam.* (Homilia 8, in Lev.)

TERTULLIAN.—The fact that this writer endeavored to oppose a practice which, to his thinking,

would be more useful if delayed until the innocent ones were grown up and had been confirmed in virtue or married, *donec aut nubant aut continentia corroborantur*, is proof sufficient of the statement of Origen that the practice was then the usage of the Church.

CYPRIAN.—One hundred and fifty years from the close of the Apostolic days we find the whole Church at Carthage setting forth its belief. Cyprian was born about A. D. 200, converted under the presbyter Cæcilius A. D. 246, and two years after, A. D. 248, accepted the office of bishop of Carthage, which he held until his martyrdom, A. D. 258. In the Epistle to Fidus is the faith of the Church:

"Cyprian and others, his colleagues, who were present in council, in number sixty-six, to Fidus their brother, greeting:

"We have read your letter, dearest brother, etc.

"But in respect of the case of infants, which you say ought not to be baptized within the second or third day after their birth, and that the law of ancient circumcision should be regarded, so that you think that one who is just born should not be baptized and sanctified within the eight days, we all thought very differently in our council; for in this course, which you thought was to be taken, *no one agreed;* but we all rather judge that the mercy and grace of God is not to be refused to any one born of man."

The whole epistle is very strong, and asserts the gift of the Holy Ghost to all alike: "For God, as he does not accept the person, so does not accept the age, since he shows himself a Father to all with well weighed quality for the attainment of heavenly grace."

It will be noted that of sixty-six Carthaginian presbyters, *not one* opposed the ancient usage. Coming down a little later, the Council of Eliberis, held about 200 years from the Age of the Apostles, affirmed that if any one went over from the Church to any heresy, he must repent before he can be readmitted.

"But if they were infants [*infantes*] when they were carried over, because as it was not by their own fault that they erred, they ought to be admitted without delay."

GREGORY NAZIANZEN, 370 A. D.—This eminent teacher continues the chain of evidence of the universal practice of the Church. The previous testimony was from a Council in Spain; Gregory represents the Greeks:

"Have you an infant? Let not wickedness have the advantage of time from his infancy; let him be sanctified, [ἐκ βρέφους ἁγιασθήτω] from the cradle let him be consecrated by the Spirit." (Oratio de Baptismo, Or. 40.) This same father, in a eulogy on Basil, another pillar of truth in that age, says: "And was not this man consecrated to God in his infancy from the womb, and carried to the steps of the baptismal fount in a coat?" That is, the white alba used at baptism.

AMBROSE, A. D. 385.—This bishop, referring to Christ's reply to Nicodemus, says: "You see he excepts no person, not an infant." And "those infants that are baptized are reformed back again from wickedness."

Chrysostom, 387 A. D.; Jerome, 390 A. D.; the Council of Carthage, 397 A. D.; Pelagius and

Augustine, A. D. 400, could all be quoted, but enough has been already given here and in the body of the work to convince one that child membership in the Church of God is as old as the Church itself. It began in the family of Abraham; was continued under special ordinance of God through all the long age of Jewish history; indorsed by prophets, and sustained by the religious consciousness of the people in exile. It was recognized by Christ, continued in the Christian Church, taught by the Apostles, accepted by the Church, and transmitted as an institution of Christianity from generation to generation, and never once opposed, until the rise of the Petrobrussians, who denied infant salvation, in the Middle Ages, about the year 1126. The creed of these men is the *first formal and public opposition to child-membership and baptism on record in the history of the ages.*

CHAPTER XI.

THE RELATION OF CHILDREN TO THE SACRAMENTS.

A SACRAMENT is an outward sign of inward grace ordained by Christ. Protestantism recognizes two sacraments only, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The relation of children to the sacraments does not depend upon their Church membership. It is grounded on a principle underlying that; for if particular sects or divisions of the Universal Church should legislate against the rights of children as regards membership, the relation which they hold to the sacraments would be destroyed. The relation which children bear to the sacraments rests upon the same ground as does their membership in the Church; that is, it is determined by the relation which they sustain to Christ and Christ sustains to them.

Concerning infant baptism, it is not necessary to treat; for on that special subject the works are multitudinous, and all that has been said on the Church membership of children in this work, applies with equal force and equally proves the validity of infant baptism. It is of divine origin, was practiced by the Apostles, was committed by them to faithful men who succeeded them in the ministry, preserved in the Church through all the periods of persecution and conflict, and transmitted without a single break in

the continuity of its practice to our day. Those who oppose the baptism of infants have their reasons for so doing, but in no case will their method of interpretation sustain their position without violence to the whole economy of God as set forth in the Old and New Testaments. Nor is this all. Their method of interpreting the Holy Scriptures, if logically adhered to, would destroy many of the soundest truths of Christianity; such as, for instance, the doctrine of the Trinity, the inspiration of whole books and parts of books included in the Sacred Canon, the communion of women, the observance of the Sabbath, and many other Christian doctrines for which and concerning which there is no *express* command in the New Testament. When opposers to infant baptism come to these Scriptural truths, they forget the logic of their method and interpret as other Christians, which it would be impossible for them to do if they introduced the unwarrantable assumptions, and employed the same principles of interpretation which they invent and use in the explanation of the simple narratives or statements which make for infant baptism in the Acts and Epistles. The concessions of Church historians are employed in a way not altogether warranted by statements of the same historians in other parts of their works. Neander, Hagenbach, Gieseler, Schaff, and others are quoted as being convinced that this practice is not of Apostolic origin, and Meyer is cited as saying that there is no witness for the rite before Tertullian. Now, in the first place, the sources of Church history, and especially of the Primitive Church, are as open to us, and the facts

there given are just as clear to one of ordinary intelligence, as they are to the writer of history. It is at bottom a question of interpretation, and historians as sincere as Neander and the rest, and not lacking either in scholarship or in the tact or insight of the historic spirit, have come to different conclusions. As a matter of fact, it does seem that Origen, who lived so near the Apostolic Period, who had traveled so extensively throughout the Christendom of his day—a man who, as Mosheim says, will be esteemed among men while time shall last, for his towering abilities in every department of religious thought—it does seem that such a man ought to be as competent a witness on this subject as Neander or any other writer of our modern age. Origen found the practice of infant baptism wherever he went, in Greece, or Rome, or Syria, or Mesopotamia; and he says it was handed down from the Apostles. Neander himself admits that infant baptism is traceable in the days of Irenæus, who was born some sixty or seventy years before Origen. The letter of Irenæus to Florinus, in which he exhorts him to maintain the Apostolic teaching and to resist all new doctrines, demonstrates his advocacy of Apostolic practice. But if infant baptism was introduced in his age, how shall we account for the silence of this zealous advocate of Apostolic usage and strong opponent of all innovation? It is well known that only a few of the early Christian writings have come down to us. Eusebius tells us (Hist. Eccles. 4, 18,) that Justin Martyr left "numerous memorials;" but of the majority of his works we have little more than the title. One of his

last writings was a reply to objections to the Christian faith. And Neander, in his remarks on infant baptism in the writings of Irenæus (Hist. of Christ. Relig. and Church During the Three First Cent., p. 198), says: "From the deficiency of historical documents of the first half of this period we must also avow that the want of any positive testimony to the custom can not be brought as an argument against its antiquity." He then goes on to remark: "The first passage which appears expressly to point to this matter is found in Irenæus." But Meyer says, "There is no witness for the rite before Tertullian," who came long afterwards, and who did not oppose the rite until he became a Montanist. Which, of Neander and Meyer, has the better historical judgment, may be left for those who quote them to decide.

In the second place, when historians like those or Gieseler vote with others that infant baptism was not universal, it looks like putting history on the rack, in order to wrench from her damaging facts not otherwise obtainable. One solitary instance of a remote semi-civilized Christian community failing to observe the practice, is sufficient, in the hands of these inquisitors of historical veracity, to destroy its universality. Why the same method of historical study does not destroy the universality of infant baptism in this our present day, is a marvelous feat of logic. When unsectarian common sense says that, from her study of early Church history, infant baptism was universal, she does not mean thereby that every Christian family in the universe adopted and rigorously practiced that baptism. That was never other than it is to-day.

Throughout Christendom infant baptism is practiced; but there are thousands of Christians who never so consecrate their children, following unconsciously the advice of Tertullian. Again: illustrious names are given in bunches, of men who were not baptized in infancy; and this, we are told, is evidence irrefutable that the baptism of infants was not general in the times of these men, and was therefore a recent addition to the ancient faith. Athanasius, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Jerome, and Augustine were all baptized after they had reached adult life, says a late writer; but this same writer is careful not to answer the stern question of history: "Did any of these men know or hear of a time when infant baptism was *not* practiced?" Augustine quotes Celestius, his opponent, as saying: "We acknowledge that infants ought to be baptized for the remission of sins, according to the rule of the Universal Church (*regulam universalis Ecclesiæ*), and according to the meaning of the gospel." Augustine also quotes another of his opponents, Pelagius, as saying: "He is slandered by men, as if he denied the sacrament of baptism to young children. He never heard even of any impious heretic who would avow such a thing in regard to little children; for who is there so ignorant of Gospel reading that he would—not to say, venture to affirm this, but even, in a heedless way, think such a thing." All this, every student student of Church history knows, Augustine approved. Gregory Nazianzen would put off the baptism until the child was three years old, except when in danger of death. Chrysostom, in his Homily 40 in Genesiso (Edit. Savill., Jm. I), expresses his belief

contrary to what the author we are referring to seems to think it is: "But our circumcision—I mean the grace of baptism—gives cure without pain, and procures for us a thousand benefits, and fills us with the grace of the Spirit. And it has no determinate time, as that had; but it is lawful to any one in the very beginning of his age, or in the middle of it, or in old age, to receive this circumcision without hands." So we might go through the list. Many eminent men of the late Nicene period, and after, were baptized late in life, because from the time of Tertullian the idea that baptism washed away all sin became general; and lest sinful days should intervene between baptism and the hour of death, it was natural that it would be put off as late as possible. Thus much have we said on this subject.

Respecting the partaking of the Lord's Supper by children, it is necessary to explain their relation to that sacrament, because of the ill-founded charge of inconsistency alleged against the Churches by those opposed to child-membership. If children are truly baptized, and are members of Christ's Church, why, we are asked, are they refused the communion of the body and blood of Christ?

First. Between *infant* communion and child-communion there is a wide difference. An infant is a child, but a child is not necessarily an infant. Infant communion has no warrant in Scripture; for we never read there, in any instance, of *households* partaking of the Holy Sacrament. This is precisely what, from our view of the continuity of the Old Testament Church in the Church of the New Testament, we

should expect. The Jewish infant, although he was circumcised, did not eat the Passover; because he could not; and he did not partake when he could, until he had been instructed in its meaning. To give the Passover to one who could not understand its significance, would be to destroy the very end for which it was instituted. There is a profound distinction between Circumcision and the Passover. The first is the symbol, the sign and seal of a covenant relation between God and man. It symbolizes much, but it mainly sets forth what must be, and thus is, the life-long token of obligation, and of the promise of God if the obligation signified is fulfilled. The Passover is the Old Testament symbol of redemption. It is sacrificial and commemorative, and unless one can enter into the meaning of both, the symbol is no symbol.

Now, Christian baptism is also thus distinguished from the Lord's Supper. It is a sign and seal of a covenant, and introduces one into the Church of Christ. The Supper of the Lord is also a covenant, and it is both sacrificial and commemorative. Those who partake of it, eat of the bread, "discerning the Lord's body," and looking unto Christ's death as a sacrifice for sin, and it is, therefore, on the part of those who eat, *an act of faith.* In drinking the wine we recognize the blood of the everlasting covenant, the blood shed for the remission of sin, which can only be done by genuine faith in the precious blood of Christ. To participate, then, in this most holy institution of the Christian religion, it is absolutely necessary that one should "discern the Lord's body," for without this there is no communion. Hence, although

preached by the Greek Church, the New Testament doctrine of the Eucharist forbids *infant* communion. It is commemorative. St. Paul says: "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do *show forth* the Lord's death until he come." Our blessed Lord said: "As oft as ye do this, *do it in remembrance of me*,"—which was not merely to be a commemoration of the historical event of Christ's death, but as a publication of that death as a sacrifice, according to the teachings of Christ for the remission of sin. Now, it it is evident, since an infant can not, by the very limitations which God, the Author of our being, has placed upon it as an infant, fulfill these requirements, without which there is no sacrament of the Supper, that therefore *infant* communion has no place in the Christian Church. Baptism, on its human side, like circumcision, shows what *must be;* the Lord's Supper, like the Passover, shows what the recipient *does*.

The assertion of Antipedobaptists that infant baptism stands on precisely similar historical grounds as infant communion, is without foundation. The first intimation of *infant* communion is found in the writings of Cyprian. But this was the period when the magical effects of the sacraments began to take root in Christian thinking. Tertullian, as we have seen, would put off the baptism of infants until they had some sin to wash away, and it soon became the fashion to leave that sacrament for the last of life. Infant communion would naturally follow such teachings; for, on the assumption that the sacraments benefited *ex opere operato*, there would be no reason to exclude infants. But that error was unknown

before the days of Tertullian, and consequently he nowhere mentions it, nor is there the faintest trace of it visible in any of the writers prior to him.

Second. Child communion is a different matter. It is practiced by evangelical Churches, and has been the usage of the Church of God in all ages. Baptized children stand in this respect also, by virtue of their relation to Christ, on the same ground with adult believers. There is no New Testament requirement which the child instructed can not fulfill according to the ability which God has given it, just as well as the older member of the Church. The Church requirements of both are identical. The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Church of England, as other Churches, make the same appeal to all without distinction.

THE INVITATION.—"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

"Wherefore ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking henceforth in his holy ways; draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort; and, devoutly kneeling, make your humble confession to Almighty God."

There is no inconsistency, then, in the action of those Churches who practice, according to Scripture and Apostolic usage, infant baptism and child-membership, in the relation which their children sustain

to the sacraments. The inconsistency, alas! is, it must be confessed, in the deplorable fact that the communion of children is not made a matter of serious concern on the part of parents. That baptized children should be suffered to grow up without instruction of a particular nature in the things of God, just as if they had never received the sacred ordinance; that they should be neglected by the pastors and officials of the Church, and allowed to take their chances in all things of a particular nature pertaining to God just like other children; that they should be allowed to go on from year to year without experiencing Christ in their young souls,—this, and all these, are not inconsistencies, they are great sins, for which God will, and does, hold us responsible. We always think a child has sense enough to sin and to run in the ways of darkness, but *why* is it that we look askance at religion in children and deem their conversion so unimportant? Emphasis is placed on the conversion of adults, and the children are in a measure discounted. When will the Church of God get on the side of God's law? Never will there be that piety, that serious devotion to religion, in the Church, until *tremendous importance* is attached to the religious culture and experience of children. The future of Religion lies there, as does the future of the Nation. Efforts to convert the world while neglecting the children, is like destroying an army in front of you while behind you is growing up another. This work of child salvation must begin, not in the Church—that is, by the ministry of the Church—but *in the family*. The family is the one spot which must be kept as the holy of holies—not in

opposition to the Church, but as part of it—and it is there where the child must receive its best and most lasting and most determining blessings. This insures a family religion, the base of all Church vigor and piety. For what mother or father will pray with their child, and endeavor to lead it into a conscious experience of Divine Grace, and yet themselves remain insensible to the love of the Heavenly Father and the God of all comfort? In the deep ways of God "a little child shall lead them." The care and solicitous study of child-nature on the part of those whose blood runs in the veins of the child thus yearned over, will tell for permanent good on the Church at large; for, since the design of the Church is to raise up a holy seed, the interests of that Church in whose doctrines and spirit the child is trained will, in the nature of things, be dear to the heart and mind of the godly parents. Thus does God reward the Church that obeys his laws, natural and revealed.

Baptized children should be recorded in the books of the Church in which they are baptized, and be recognized as *probationary members* until, having come to proper age, they are admitted into the full fellowship of the Church. They should be placed under the affectionate care of teachers, whose sole effort should be to lead the young mind in lines of holy thinking and simple understanding of the elements of the gospel, for the immediate purpose of bringing the child into deliberate, personal communion with Christ. Never should the child be regarded as a child of the devil, and that he must, in all probability, serve a long apprenticeship to the dark fiend until he

has sense enough to turn to God. O, the superstition of it! Rather let him understand the significance of his baptism, and the blessedness of a life kept clean from the corruption and wretchedness of the world from the earliest days. Let him be subject to all necessary discipline like any other member, and in all things treated as such. Then will the Church and the world see the incalculable benefit upon Church piety and aggressiveness of infant baptism and the membership of children.

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